

The Role of Fear In the Unification of Nepal

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Several years ago Yadu Nath Khanal had the kindness to read the typescript of my book The Rise of the House of Gorkha ¹. It was typical of him that he took the trouble to write a long letter of appreciation of my efforts to analyze the factors involved in the unification of Nepal. Equally typical of him was the fact that in his letter of appreciation he raised a question that demanded further study. He wrote, 'At the end of my reading, I have been left with the feeling that the full meaning of the threat of British expansion in India to the survival and security of the emergent Gorkha State is only implied in your book rather than expressed'.

The question, then, was fairly put. Did British expansion in India constitute a threat to the survival and security of the emergent Gorkha State? Further, if such a threat existed, was Gorkhali reaction one of fear, one of precaution, or one of heightened activity towards internal unity and external security?

My first reaction to the basic premiss was negative. There is an anti-British syndrome in much of the historical literature of Nepal that I feel is anachronistic. Certain historians have read into the late eighteenth century history of Nepal attitudes that did not develop historically until the time of the Anglo-Nepal war of 1814-16, or even later. However, on reflection my negative reaction seemed too simplistic, and it was clear that, whether I liked it or not, this question required further study.

Two factors precluded my tackling the problem at that time. First, it was, and is, a very difficult problem. It calls for the discovery of a Nepali attitude towards the British, and there are few things more difficult for an historian to document than an attitude. Secondly, at that time I was far too close to my book to be able to look anew into the documents for nuances that might possibly indicate such an attitude. Consequently I put the question aside for the time with the resolution to take it up again at a later date. In this article I would like to attempt an answer to the question posed by Yadu Nath Khanal, both to show my appreciation for the question and my respect for the questioner.

The Tyranny of Time

I have said the question is difficult, and it is. The difficulty involved is the direct result of the difficulty we experience in trying to understand both the history of Nepal and the history of the East India Company well enough to visualize for ourselves

how these two growing powers must have appeared to one another two centuries ago. It is not really significant historically how we regard either Nepal or the East India Company in this context. It is how they saw one another. Our effort must be directed towards an appreciation of that confrontation. Once we have made this effort the significance of Prithvinarayan Shah's actions or those of the governor of Fort William will be a great deal clearer.

Our effort, however, will be considerable. We are struggling not against ignorance but against the tyranny of time. Whenever, as in the present case, we work with events of two centuries past, we find that time is our enemy, and a very hard-hearted enemy at that. We tend to see things as static that were in reality in violent motion. Also, because of the tyranny of time, we tend to view events in a set pattern instead of seeing them as the conflict between complex and interacting forces. Finally, because of this tyranny of time we lose perspective. We see meaningful connections between events that were temporally or causally remote. For the sake of clarity I will enlarge on each of these points. I think it is important, even at the risk of an apparent digression, that we understand clearly the dimensions of our task before attempting to get on with it.

The tyranny of time causes us to see things as static which were actually in motion. There is a tendency even for historians who have a thorough grasp of the history of Nepal to refer to the British in India as a 'presence' or a 'static force'--a 'background', if you will, against which the drama of Nepalese history develops. In the writing of history, of course, this tendency crystalizes, because the exigencies of space and development force the writer to relegate British Indian history to an introductory chapter, to footnotes, or to an occasional brief comment. The writer's story is about Nepal, and it is very difficult to get on with that story if he is obliged to make constant references to the growth of the East India Company. On reflection, of course, it is obvious to every historian of Nepal that there was nothing static about the British presence in India. There was quite evident growth. Further, a serious study of the East India Company makes it quite apparent that there was much more than growth. There was a change in the attitudes of the Company's servants in India, a change in the nature of the Company's presence in India, and a radical change in the nature of the Company itself. This change is important to our topic and must be taken into consideration in any attempt to understand the problem we have set ourselves in this study.

By token of this same tyranny of time, there is a tendency for us in the latter half of this twentieth century to look back from our point of vantage and see the history of Nepal as a set series of events. We trace the story of the unification of Nepal, from the time of Prithvinarayan Shah's conquest of Nuwakot in

1744 up to the time when Amar Singh Thapa's men fought valiantly but vainly to conquer Kot Kangra in the early nineteenth century, from event to event, according to a set pattern. Historians have carefully traced these events from the records of the past and arranged them in a meaningful order, and we accept their pattern precisely because it is meaningful. This, too, is a trap for the unwary. Working back into the past, as we are, according to the pattern set by historians, we see the success or failure of decisions taken, the playing out of strategies, and the ultimate unification of the Nepali state--and we see only this. We neglect the very important fact that at the time when men like Prithvinarayan Shah were making their critical decisions there was no set series of events. There was no pattern that led neatly up to the final victory. Decisions were painful choices between alternatives, and the decision to do one thing rather than another was taken because at that moment in time it seemed the wiser or safer or more rewarding course to follow. The set patterns are the work of historians. If we want to appreciate the implications of a decision, we must study the possible alternatives to that decision, and in this respect the options that were open to Prithvinarayan Shah were as important as the decisions he made. Since, however, the nature and the quality of these options have usually not been preserved for us, we are caught up by the tyranny of time and almost forced to think of the conscious choices between options through which Prithvinarayan Shah developed his strategies. The danger in such a mode of thinking lies precisely here, that we impose our evaluation of the relative merits, dangers, or benefits to be derived from a given decision and presume that Prithvinarayan Shah acted as he did because he saw the same dangers that we have seen, whereas in fact he may have seen no danger at all or have totally discounted it as a threat.

The third burden that time imposes on the historian is loss of perspective. When we look back into history there is a strong tendency to telescope events. Now anyone who has ever used a telescope knows that a telescope destroys perspective. From our own experience we know that people who are in fact quite some distance apart, when seen through the lens of a telescope, appear to be almost face-to-face. Telescoping does this. When we telescope historical events, we run into two real dangers. One danger lies in our assumption that because events were approximately contemporary there must have been some mutual influence between them. Investigation, however, proves the 'approximately' to have been a gap of five or ten years, and there was, in point of fact, no possibility whatever of mutual influence between the events in question. A second danger, and one far more serious, is the telescoping of growth or change. In studying an institution we find it useful for the purpose of discussion to assign a date for the beginning of this institution (the same could be said, of course, for an historically significant idea or for a movement in history). Then, ignoring the time factor involved in the growth of the institution, we assume in

our thinking that within a few years of the date we have assigned for the beginning of the institution the institution already exercised the influence that historians have attributed to it. Perspective has been lost. In our view of events we have not considered the time that is necessary for growth. Anachronistically we have assigned to the infancy period of the institution the impact that it should have only years later in its maturity. It is this loss of perspective that leads historians and students of history to think of the East India Company as 'static' or a 'backdrop' of history, as I have mentioned earlier. We say to ourselves, 'There was an East India Company, and it was very powerful. It managed to establish itself in power throughout most of India. Such an institution must have constituted a serious threat to Nepal'. We may even put into our statement words like 'gradually', 'successively', or 'in stages', but these words are not operative in our thinking of the East India Company. For all practical purposes we think of the Company as it existed at the turn of the century, say in 1805, and when assume it was like this, only smaller, fifty years earlier. Perspective has been lost, and it must be restored, if we are to have any meaningful understanding of events. Such a restoration will take conscious effort and solid research. This can be done, provided, of course, we first admit to ourselves that such a danger of loss of perspective does in fact exist and that we are in no way immune to it. As far as is humanly possible, we must do away with the approximations that clutter our thinking on the period of history we are examining and ensure that our assumptions are the product of solid reasoning and not the result of labour-saving guess-work.

A. Prithvinarayan Shah

The Chronicles make it very clear that in November 1742 Prithvinarayan Shah went to Banaras. Baburam Acharya and other historians after him lay great stress on this visit, insisting that during his stay in Banaras Prithvinarayan Shah was able to observe the situation then prevailing in North India ². At the same time, my own analysis of Prithvinarayan Shah convinces me that he was a leader endowed with the gifts of keen observation and practical genius. It becomes pertinent, then, to ask ourselves what Prithvinarayan Shah learned while he was in Banaras. It is also useful to ask what significance this knowledge had for him and what action it prompted him to take.

1. Input

The first and most obvious fact that Prithvinarayan Shah would have learned in Banaras, if he had not already come to know it, was that the Mughul empire was in a state of collapse. Such a state of affairs would have challenged his inquisitive mind beyond measure. Surely he must have asked himself the usual question, 'Why?' 'What has happened?' 'How is it possible that Akbar's empire has fallen

apart so rapidly?' A mind of his calibre would certainly have posed far more penetrating questions. 'Why was Akbar content to found an empire-- why not strive for greater unity?' 'Why was the imperial throne the constant bone of contention between rival claimants?' 'Why should emperors from Akbar to Aurangzeb have squandered so much time and money and so many men in the vain attempt to bring the Deccan under their sway--what was the logic of this endless assault on the South?' Questions such as these, and probably a good many more, must have agitated Prithvinarayan Shah's mind and demanded something more meaningful as answers than the handy list of causes provided by textbooks and manuals 3.

Akbar was the one who settled for empire. He did it because greater unity was not within his grasp. On this historians agree, though they tend to quibble about the significance of this. Some attribute his actions to prudence; others to foresight; and there are those who say his actions reflected his growing appreciation of the type of state he wanted to structure. The fact remains, however, that Akbar did not conquer the Rajputs of Amber because the conquest would have cost him more than he was able to pay in terms of both human and material resources. He accepted what was basically a compromise because he was too weak to achieve total victory. No matter how diplomatically Akbar was able to weave the Rajputs into the structure of his state, this weakness remained. It was a constant drain on the diplomatic talents of his successors. It demanded constant attention. And it was a constant, though latent, threat to the unity of the Mughul state.

Another area of weakness in the Mughul state that historians tend to gloss over is the very nature of the terrain the empire embraced. Most of the Mughul empire lay in the Indo-Gangetic plain. Troop movements were consequently relatively easy, but distances were vast. The history of Mughul rule indicates that time and time again the centrifugal force of distance thwarted Mughul efforts to dominate the land. The solution that Akbar imposed was one of regional or provincial governors. But distance encouraged rebellion, nourished it, and sometimes crowned it with success. Distance demanded that there be regional armies. And regional armies developed loyalties to their own commanders. Akbar sought but never found an ideal of the state that would command the loyalty of all of his subjects in an effort to overcome this tendency. The very religious tolerance that commended him to the majority was considered heresy by many of those who formed the ruling elite, and so constituted a dividing force. Even the throne, which should have exercised a primitive and basic unifying force, served less and less as a symbol of unity and became largely a symbol of the wealth that the emperor commanded, and therefore a symbol of strife, of contention, and of fratricidal warfare.

The flatness of the Indo-Gangetic plain also dictated the drive toward the Deccan. The plains offered lines of defense that

were too few and lay invitingly open to the enemy of the north. A secure hold on India demanded control of the central Deccan. Only there would the Mughuls find the strong hills combined with sufficient wealth to guarantee a lasting hold on the North. But the very factors that made the Deccan desirable to the Mughuls also made it unattainable. The South was a strong and viable unit, well-endowed by nature for stubborn defense against invading armies. Even when the Mughuls were able to amass the military power needed for conquest of the Deccan, the weaknesses imposed by regionalism and uncertain loyalty within the Mughul empire itself undermined their efforts and led to eventual frustration.

Akbar and the Mughuls never solved the problem of succession to the throne, the problem of distance, nor the problem of decentralization. And these failures only served to enhance the basic weakness inherent in the imperialist concept of a state. The governmental institutions Akbar handed on to his successors were far from the perfect structures they are often represented to have been. Given a reliable formula of succession, men of genius might have made them function to satisfaction. But in the Mughul empire there was no reliable formula of succession, and the men who reached the imperial throne were often so encumbered with political and financial obligations to those who had helped them fight their way to that pinnacle of power and so mediocre as administrators that the system broke down of its own weight.

Prithvinarayan Shah was a man of genius in the world of practical affairs. Once he had seen and discussed this situation prevailing in North India, the least that he would have observed in the Mughul collapse were:

1. The importance of a secure succession;
2. The inherent weakness of the Mughul position as long as Mughul control was limited to the Indo-Gangetic plain; and
3. The problems that communications impose on a unitary state.

It is highly probable that he observed a great deal more in the Mughul collapse than it is possible for me to realize at this point in time, some two hundred years after the event. The points that I have stressed, however, are the very least that I think a man of his stature and ability would have noted for future reference.

A second aspect of events on the Indian scene that must have struck Prithvinarayan Shah forcefully during his visit to Banaras was the rise of the Maratha power. The full import of Maratha incursions into North India has long been obscured because of the romanticizing of Indian history during the nationalist period. The Marathas were Hindus, and they were doing their best to put

the foreign interlopers in their place. This was sufficient to endear them to nationalist historians. In consequence, the mantle of Shivaji was spread widely over the actions of many a Maratha leader who had no more right to share in Shivaji's ideal than a munitions manufacturer has to talk of the ideal of peace. By the time Prithvinarayan Shah reached Banaras the nebulous concept of the Hindu-Pad-Padshahi ⁴ that had been the unifying ideal introduced by the Peshwa Baji Rao I had been cast aside by his son and successor Balaji Baji Rao in favour of a purely Maharastrian ideal. In practical terms this proved to be a state whose existence depended on the ability of its sons to impose their authority and their right to chauth ⁵ on as many neighbouring states as strength and determination made possible. Maratha authority and chauth were very polite expressions for what Prithvinarayan Shah was to learn was little short of rapine of the territories the Marathas invaded. Surely the first Maratha invasion of Bengal that was in progress when Prithvinarayan Shah reached Banaras was this. It is doubtful if there was a day during his stay in Banaras when he did not hear this invasion discussed and condemned, and we can be sure he followed the Maratha exploits with interest. It was not merely the fact that the Marathas had dared to invade the Bengal subah, nor that they had successfully evaded Alivardi Khan's efforts to bring them to a pitched and final battle that would have aroused his interest. Far more significant to the hill raja must have been the endless stories of wanton cruelty, outright greed, and unbelievable unconcern for the productivity of the land. And he must have reacted sharply to the Marathas' contempt for the economy and total disregard for the welfare of the peasants who were overrun in the course of the nine-month Maratha raid ⁶.

When Bhaskar Ram and the Marathas were finally driven out of Bengal in December 1742, Prithvinarayan Shah must also have followed with the most intense interest the accounts that reached Banaras of Subahdar Safdar Jung of Avadh's invasion of Bihar (Bihar was at that time an appanage of the Bengal subah). Avadh was a subah of the empire. Bengal was a subah of the same empire. And here were the two, bickering with one another in this most dangerous way, while on the southern fringes of their territories the Marathas were preparing a second invasion. Surely this was the ultimate criticism of the Mughul system of rule that would allow mere governors to assume the right to enrich their own territories at the expense of another part of the empire, while the empire itself faced such manifest danger. This lack of control, the fragmenting tendency of the empire, and the power of the subahdars to do their will regardless of the emperor's wishes must have made a profound impression on him.

If, however, Prithvinarayan Shah found this aspect of Indian affairs surprising, he could have found the sequel to the first Maratha invasion of Bengal nothing short of astounding. In February 1743, just one month prior to Prithvinarayan's departure from Banaras, Raghuji Bhonsle led a second Maratha invasion into the Bengal subah. Raghuji fully intended on this raid to collect chauth from Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. Emperor Muhammad Shah had promised the right to collect chauth in this area to the Maratha Chhatrapati Shahu, and Shahu had in turn assigned this right to Raghuji 7. But the Delhi emperor had meanwhile been thoroughly dismayed at the havoc created in Bengal by the Maratha invasion of 1742. In a desperate attempt to control Raghuji and spare the ravaged province, he called on the Maratha Peshwa to protect the Bengal subah. And so it was that Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao came north, leading a band of Maratha warriors, to drive out another Maratha general and his band of Maratha warriors 8. Now surely here was a situation that must have caused the young Prithvinarayan Shah to ask many questions about the nature of the Maratha state. He would have been told that Raghuji Bhonsle was an important jagirdar in the Maratha nation, and that his jagir was in Berar. Prithvinarayan Shah would have further learned that the Marathas regularly assigned jagirs on a permanent basis, making them hereditary and granting the jagirdar almost unlimited powers to expand his territories and to raid neighbouring territories as long as he directed his efforts away from the territories and poaching grounds of his co-jagirdars 9. He would also have learned that one reason for this endless pillaging, plundering, and imposing of chauth was the fact that the Maratha economy was vastly wasteful, that the Chhatrapati and the Peshwa seemed always in serious need of money. Here indeed was abundant food for thought for the young hill raja. Additional food for thought would have been provided Prithvinarayan Shah as soon as he asked the obvious question, 'Why doesn't the Chhatrapati or the Peshwa merely order Raghuji back or at least give him strict instructions as to what should be done in Bengal?' The very inability of the ruler or his prime minister to exercise effective command over the Maratha armies exposed for Prithvinarayan Shah more clearly than any analysis the weakness of the Maratha state. If one cannot control one's armies, it is futile to speak about nation-building. Armies put power into the hands of their commanders, and unless some method of controlling those commanders is built into the system of rule, their armies become agents of disunity and disruption.

We might further ask ourselves at this stage, 'Did Prithvinarayan Shah see while he was at Banaras evidence of the growth of British power?' Such information surely would have been significant in the light of later events. Some Nepali historians have answered in the affirmative. But one wonders. . . One wonders what he might have seen. At this time Alivardi Khan was laying a heavy hand on the East India Company in Bengal, even to the point of demanding contributions in cash from them to help defray the cost of defending the Bengal subah against the Marathas. The

Maratha raids had totally disrupted the Company's trade so that the British were hard-pressed to raise money for the next year's investment and were forced to borrow from the Jagat Seths to pay the forced contribution that Alivardi demanded 10. Militarily they were so weak that to protect Calcutta at the time of the second Maratha invasion they raised a militia of the inhabitants of the town and loaned money to the local merchants to dig a trench round the town (the well-known Maratha ditch of Calcutta) 11. British factors seem never to have been in serious personal danger, but their factories were not proof against Maratha looting, and goods once lost to the Marathas in this way were never regained 12. There was, apparently, no sign of the future power of the Company, unless we consider it a hint of things to come that many Indians fled to Calcutta to seek shelter and protection with the Company during the time of the Maratha incursions. If, however, Prithvinarayan Shah was able to deduce from this any danger of a British ascendancy in India, he would have had to be blessed not only with great vision but some sort of second sight. To see that the Company was strongly positioned and intended to hold their position regardless of the Marathas could easily have been done. But to put any greater interpretation on their actions was, I think, beyond the power of any observer in India at that time. There simply was not sufficient evidence for such a conclusion.

2. Output

When Prithvinarayan Shah returned from Banaras to Gorkha in March 1743, he brought with him ideas that were to exercise a profound influence on his own future campaigns and his rule in Nepal. What he did not bring back from Banaras was any pronounced fear of the British. He neither feared them nor their intentions. In their present situation the British were too weak to be significant in terms of Nepal, and it was far too early for their intentions to begin to manifest themselves. And in this Prithvinarayan Shah was, I think, extremely fortunate. The ideas he brought back with him were positive, and his use of these ideas made it possible for him to structure a solidly impressive state that was to outlast not only the tottering Mughul empire and the surging Maratha power but even the British empire in India that in time supplanted both Mughul and Maratha as paramount power in the subcontinent. Today Mughuls, the Maratha nation, and the British empire in India are all memories. But Prithvinarayan Shah's work remains, vigorous, strong, and independent. I strongly doubt that any of this would have been possible if British power had so impressed Prithvinarayan Shah while he was in Banaras that his reactions became the negative reactions of fear. As it was, he was able to study and learn, to reflect and project the kind of state that would be viable in a region that presented communications difficulties that were far more taxing than those that confronted the Mughuls, challenges to central rule more formidable than those facing the Mughuls, challenges to central rule more formidable than

those facing the Marathas, and problems of balance in trade and agriculture that were far more demanding than any the British solved in their days of power in India.

What were some of these conclusions that Prithvinarayan Shah reached on the basis of his Banaras experience in 1742-3?

1. The future of the state depends on a smooth succession to the throne. Nothing must be done to encourage any of the collaterals of the royal family to assume that they have a right to a direct share in the king's rule during his lifetime or that they have any hope of succeeding him after his death.
2. Poor communications can only be overcome by the strictest discipline both in the army and among local representatives of government.
3. The surest way to destroy this discipline is to grant jagirs for life either to military or civil authorities or to make military or civil positions hereditary.
4. Wanton destruction of property during a campaign must necessarily impoverish the victor as well as the defeated. War is fought against opposing armies, not against the land.
5. The strength of the state rests on two correlative ideas: the king must rule--and in doing so he must have total control of his armies; and the king's true wealth lies in his people--not in lands, not in gold, but in his people.
6. No power can exist for long in the Indo-Gangetic plain without being securely anchored either in the hills to the north or in the Deccan to the south. And the Deccan has great defensive strength.

It takes very little knowledge of Prithvinarayan Shah as he is revealed in his Dibya Upadesh ¹³ to appreciate how richly these ideas matured in his mind and became norms for government in Nepal after his conquest of Kathmandu Valley, Makwanpur, Bijayapur and Chaudandi. They have, in fact, become the measuring rod against which successors to his throne have judged their performances ever since.

Had Prithvinarayan Shah enjoyed the vantage point of history or had he been able to study the internal workings of the East India Company in the winter of 1742-3, he would, of course, have had more than sufficient reason for entertaining deep suspicions and fear of the Company as early as 1743. But there is no historical basis for assuming that such knowledge was even remotely

possible at that time. Here one must be acutely aware of the 'tyranny of time'. There exists not only the danger that we will assume as taking place in 1743 events that actually transpired much later, but also the danger that we will assume that the Company itself was different only in size and power and opportunity from what it was to become by the time of Prithvinarayan Shah's death in 1775. And this would be a serious mistake. It is true that the Company was there. It is also true that the stimuli were already active that would in due time prompt those reactions from the Company that would lead it to power. But the Company's reactions were too embryonic in 1743 for Prithvinarayan Shah to have detected them. We must realize that the Company's growth in India was an evolutionary growth, with the drive for security forming its inner logic and the collapse of Mughul authority forming the challenge that forced the Company to grow or to wither. This statement, of course, requires clarification, which I shall try to supply here.

B. The East India Company

The trading company that came to be known as the East India Company had a long history, a complicated history, and a complex history ¹⁴. As a trading company that became a political power, its growth was evolutionary. This evolution of the Company from trade to the assumption of almost complete political control of India is not something that can be explained by the casual statement of a few causes of its growth. Nor can we conceptualize the stages of this growth by the simple description of the events that led up to and away from certain major battles in the history of India, though this, of course, is the way the Company's growth is usually charted. If we seriously wish to understand what really lay behind the metamorphosis of the Company into a political power we must make a concerted effort to get inside the Company's 'skin'; we must try to see it functioning as a trading company faced with real and concrete problems. Only then is it possible to understand the thrust of the Company at a time when India was particularly vulnerable, and only then can we understand the quality of the potential threat that the Company posed towards the nascent kingdom of Nepal.

1. An Evolutionary Company

Let us first realize that the Company began as a London-based joint trading company, which was later converted into a stock company. As a London-based company, its first problem was to attract in London itself capital with which to carry out its functions. Initially a group of merchants shared the risks involved in each voyage and shared equally in the resultant profit or loss. As time went on and the Company developed, it was reorganized into a stock company in which many investors, not necessarily merchants, placed their money. Thus, the possibilities for profit in the Company

were expanded. Profit could be gained not only from the direct sale of goods brought back to Europe from India and the East but also from the manipulation of shares of stock on the London market. A series of successful voyages meant higher profits in trade for the Company, higher dividends for share-holders, and a higher premium on the shares themselves. A series of misfortunes meant a loss to the Company, no dividends for the share-holders, and a depreciation below par value of the shares. Share-holders consequently sold off their shares even at a loss to avoid still greater losses as the shares continued to drop in value. Of course, if capital were driven away from the Company in this way, the Company would soon be unable to function for want of sufficient capital to procure additional goods in India and the East.

Misfortune could strike the Company in any of a number of ways. The most prominent of these were loss at sea or failure of the Company's agents in India to acquire at a suitable rate goods that could be sold readily in the European market. The danger of loss at sea, of course, emphasised the importance of naval power in relation to the eastern trade. The Company's merchantmen had to be protected not only from the danger of pirates but also from the raids of other European fleets in the war-torn years during which the Company grew. Britain's emergence of a major naval power in the eighteenth century and its naval dominance in the nineteenth thus became strong factors in the evolution of the East India Company itself. Britain's naval strength gave the Company's merchantmen the essential guarantee of a safe and untrammelled passage that was so critical to the success of the East India Company's long-range trading ventures.

Not less important was the security of the Company's trading establishment in India. Without a secure base in India for the acquisition of trade goods there was constant danger of the disruption in the whole trade pattern. This need for security for the trading establishment in India explains the Company's pre-occupation with negotiations, treaties, and firmans¹⁵. The Company's directors were not concerned merely with the possibility of trade. It was the security of trade that obsessed them. For them the legal right to trade acquired from the legitimate authorities in India was the surest way to guarantee that security of trade. This need for security, as we have seen, was based on the very nature of their trading company. Only a secure trade could give that promise of steady profits that was essential to attract capital. Steady profits and capital growth are twin features of any successful capitalistic enterprise, which is precisely what the East India Company was.

The Company's desire for a legal basis for their Indian trade had a very important corollary. Once the Company received the necessary grants from the Mughul rulers for carrying on their trade on a regular basis, the next most pressing problem was the

physical protection of their trading establishments; protection not only from marauding forces of Indians but also from possible attack from their European competitors, the Dutch and the French. Such security from physical attack meant arms, fortifications, and a certain amount of military strength ¹⁶.

Security thus became, from first to last, one of the major concerns of the Company's officers. Security of trade, security of transport, and security of investment.

Company officials always spoke about their factories, aurungs, etc. in India as their investment. In many cases money was advanced to local agents against the supply of finished goods at a future date. Not only the actual money invested in the Indian trade but also raw materials, semi-finished articles, and the final product itself all represented the Company's investment in one form or another. Once money had been advanced, disturbances in the countryside, natural calamity, or even the intervention of agents from another trading company could endanger that investment. The Company's agents had to supervise the whole process of manufacture and marketing in order to protect the Company's investment. Loss of investment meant loss of profits and ultimately loss of capital.

This concern for maximizing the return on its investment led the Company to adopt very rigid and even cruel attitudes towards the Indian craftsmen who produced the trade goods and also towards the Company's own lower level servants. Craftsmen were grossly underpaid and so were the lower ranks of the Company's own employees ¹⁷. The craftsmen initially had the right, of course, to trade with agents of another company. But in time the Company came to exercise more and more strict control so that they held a real monopoly on the products of the craftsmen in certain areas. Craftsmen were thus forced to work and sell at the Company's prices or not at all.

The Company's employees were, in a way, more fortunate. It is true that they were underpaid, but they could, if they could scrape together a little capital, carry on trade for their own profit along side of their official duties for the Company. Though the Company's directors tried frequently to prevent this private trade, the Company's officers in India often winked at it simply because they were well aware of the inadequacy of the wages paid to these lower level employees of the Company and because they indulged in the same practices themselves in order to amass their own private fortunes.

This practice eased the pinch of the Company's policies as far as the Company's own employees were concerned, but it added further burdens to the local Indian population. It is quite obvious that no private trade of the Company's servants could be overseas trade. This would be an infringement on the Company's

monopoly and would also require a whole network of agents in Europe to sell off the goods thus privately acquired. In consequence, the private trade of the Company's servants was inland trade, carried on in competition with Indian merchants. Since the Company's agents arrogated to themselves the privileges officially conferred by grants and firmans on the Company itself, they were exempt from many duties normally paid on trade in India and could therefore undersell the local merchants 18. When they used the force that the Company represented to cover their own private transactions, they could frequently buy at lower rates and force sales to the detriment of Indian trade. The local population had no protection against this high-handed misuse of privilege except such as their own rulers could give them by insisting on a strict adherence to the terms of the grants given. But this was a difficult process since it was extremely difficult to prove that an agent of the Company was acting at any given time in his private rather than his official capacity. Rulers like Alivardi Khan were able to control it to a degree, but in the collapse of authority that followed the death of Alivardi, this practice assumed greater and greater proportions 19. After the battle of Buxar in 1764 it became totally uncontrolled until Warren Hastings succeeded in introducing some regulation in the name of the Company 20.

The practice we have been discussing was, of course, illegal. But what exactly did this term illegal mean in eighteenth century India as far as an English merchant was concerned? Did British law cover his actions--thousands of mile outside of territorial England? Indian law, of course, was either Muslim or Hindu, neither of which made provisions for Europeans. The Company was therefore forced to seek from the British crown the powers to legislate for their servants in India and to establish sanctions for laws that were made 21. Once this process began, the body of law, the method of applying it, and the judicial system required to extend legal redress necessarily developed in its wake. The introduction of laws, courts, legal proceedings, and, of course, a body competent to make those laws gave to the Company very early in its growth an almost governmental structure. This was initially confined to the government of British subjects, but eventually had to be expanded to include all who lived and worked inside the Company's concessions.

The step from these early beginnings to the establishment of Company rule in India was a natural one and was easily made after the Company stepped forth as Diwan in 1772. The introduction of British parliamentary authority into the Indian scene was less the result of parliament's desire to control India than a desire to control the Company itself, which had assumed impressive stature in England and had sufficient financial power and leadership to exercise a very influential--sometimes detrimental--role both in British financial circles and in parliament itself 22. The

point I am trying to stress here, however, is not the step-by-step development of British rule in India. This, of course, was manifest as time went on. Rather, the point I want to make here is that much of this growth was the natural development of forces contained within the Company itself and brought into play by the Company's struggle for security for its investment in the context of the deterioration of authority in Mughul India. The abuses of power, the opportunism, and the flagrant disregard for the directives sent out by the Court in London to control its agents in India are already a matter of record 23.

Because these forces I have been describing were of the very nature of the Company, they were present and they were active at the time when Prithvinarayan Shah was in Banaras in 1742-3. I do not think, however, that there was sufficient evidence at that time for Prithvinarayan Shah to have assessed the strength of these forces precisely because the collapse of Mughul authority had not proceeded far enough by that date. Vestiges of Mughul strength were still to be found in certain semi-independent subahs, particularly in Bengal. Alivardi Khan was still determined to protect and encourage foreign trade, and he still possessed the means to impose peace on the land or to buy security from recurrent Maratha raids. It was the final collapse of Mughul authority with the death of Alivardi Khan in 1756 that unleashed the forces inherent in the Company's very structure. Consequently, when Prithvinarayan Shah left Banaras in March 1743 I do not think he could have been unduly concerned about the presence of the British in India. At this time the Company was still largely an unknown quantity--as was Prithvinarayan Shah himself. Much time and a great many battles would have to be fought before Nepal and the Company came face to face as rivals and eventually as opponents.

2. The Transition

In 1748 the Company's Court of Directors in London ordered that the fortifications of Calcutta be strengthened 24. The work was begun, but Alivardi Khan ordered it stopped, insisting 'You are merchants, what need have you of fortifications?' 25 And Alivardi Khan was strong enough to enforce his order. But Alivardi's health declined, and in 1753 he was already suffering from what was to be his last illness. During his illness the Company quietly resumed work on their fortifications. At the time of Alivardi's death the work was progressing rapidly. Alivardi Khan's successor, his grandson Siraj-ud-daulah, saw in the Company's activity a threat to his rule. He swept over these fortifications in 1756 to take Calcutta, and the Company experienced a direct challenge to their trading establishment and investment in Bengal. The British were, of course, not nearly as weak as Siraj-ud-daulah's easy victory seemed to indicate. Their attention had been temporarily diverted to the Carnatic in South India, where they learned, among other things, the interesting fact that a few British troops thrown

into either side of a contest between local aspirants to power was often enough to turn the tide of victory and to win for themselves the lion's share of the prize. In 1757, however, the British came storming back into Calcutta. Once this base was secured they turned their new-found knowledge to the task of securing their position against any further whims to power by Siraj-ud-daulah. The story of Plassey; the defeat, capture, and execution of Siraj-ud-daulah; and the installation of Mir Jafar as nawab of Bengal are all familiar to students of history. Equally familiar is the account of the eventual ouster of Mir Jafar and the battle of Ruxar which gave the British a position of supreme power in North India. What perhaps is not so familiar is the relatively small number of troops the Company committed to these battles that were to prove so fateful for India.

In 1751 the regular military establishment of the Company in Calcutta probably consisted of five companies of infantry and one company of artillery 26. Six years later at Plassey the British army consisted of 1,000 Europeans and 2,000 sepoys 27. By November of that same year, however, disease and debauchery had reduced this number to 450 Europeans and 1,250 sepoys. Fresh recruits were received, but in October 1758, 500 Europeans and 2,000 sepoys were sent to the Northern Circars, south of Calcutta. This reduced the Company's forces in Calcutta to 420 European infantry, 102 artillery, and 2,000 sepoys 28. When Clive joined Mir Qasim in 1758 to help the nawab put down a mutiny, he had with him 500 Europeans and 1,500 sepoys 29. In December of that same year the Company's officers in Calcutta were pleading with the Court of Directors to grant them a force of 2,000 European troops to man the fortifications in Calcutta 30. Towards the end of 1759 there was still an army of only 1,200 Europeans and 7,500 sepoys in the Bengal presidency 31. Five years later, in June 1764, when Major Adams took the field against Mir Qasim at Buxar, he had with him about 1,100 Europeans and 4,000 sepoys 32. In September of the same year the officers of the Company in Calcutta indicated in a letter to Court that of the 2,600 European soldiers they were authorized to have in Bengal they had in fact only about 1,000 33.

In time, of course, these numbers would be considerably augmented, but before there could be any substantial increase some method of financing a larger army would have to be agreed upon. As long as the Company financed its own army, each soldier in the Company's pay reduced profits from trade by just that much. This problem was solved in due time by having local rulers such as the nawab finance a part of the army. We must not think, however, that this led to a dramatic increase in the size of the regular military establishment. In March 1767, for example, the Court decided to authorize an increase in their military forces. The army in Bengal was to consist of three regiments of two battalions each, or a total of 3,165 men, including both officers and ranks. To this number should be added artillery personnel to the

number of 446. But, in view of this increase in the European military establishment, the Court at the same time recommended a reduction in the number of brigade sepoys from 18,000 to 15,000 34.

This last series of figures is of particular interest, because these norms were set in a letter dispatched from London in 1768 and reaching India approximately a year later. This is about eighteen months after the first clash between Gorkhali and Company troops. The Company's European army at the time of Hariharpur, then, must have been less than 3,000 men. During the same period Prithvinarayan Shah's army numbered a minimum of 1200 men. This figure was augmented in times of stress such as that at Hariharpur by the addition of peasants pressed into military service on a jhara basis 35. When we take into account the fact that the Company's forces were constantly employed in military action to strengthen the Company's hold on North India as well as South India, the difference between Prithvinarayan Shah's military force and the Bengal army was even less significant 36.

3. The First Clash--1767

Between 1743, when Prithvinarayan Shah left Banaras, and 1767, when the Gorkhals and the Company's troops clashed for the first time, considerable changes had taken place in India, and it is certain that Prithvinarayan Shah was aware of them. The Calcutta trading establishment of 1743 had become the king-maker of the north and the only effective power in the Gangetic plain. The Company's military tactics and the effectiveness of their artillery had proved to be more valuable in battle than battalions of sepoys. It had become a dangerous force because one tended to underestimate it. All this Prithvinarayan Shah realised. There is no indication, however, that he changed his plans at all in the light of this knowledge, which suggests that he did not consider the Company itself as a serious threat to his own position.

In April 1767 we find Prithvinarayan writing to both Rumbold in Patna and Golding in Bettiah 37. This was approximately the same time that Jaya Prakash Malla's vakils Muktan Unda and Faqir Ramdoss approached Golding to solicit British aid in repelling the Gorkhali attack on the Newar kingdoms. Though these letters have not been preserved, we know from the comments Golding and Rumbold made about them that Prithvinarayan Shah was well aware of Jaya Prakash's intentions a full six months before the actual British attempt to send military aid to Jaya Prakash Malla and that these letters represent the steps Prithvinarayan took to forestall British intervention. When this effort failed, as it did, Prithvinarayan Shah made no move to interrupt his campaign in Kathmandu Valley. There was no massing of Gorkhali troops at a position south of the Valley in anticipation of the British move into the hills, and that the Gorkhali troops moved out overnight to meet this attack 38. A letter of Prithvinarayan Shah himself to Ram

Krishna Kunwar in early October 1767 reveals Prithvinarayan Shah as being very much in control of the situation and very sure of the outcome ³⁹. The battle was fought on 10 October, and the results were exactly as Prithvinarayan Shah's letter had indicated that they would be.

In retrospect, we see in this first clash between the Gorkhalis and the British indications of Prithvinarayan Shah's own awareness of British power, a reluctance to interrupt his own campaign to meet their challenge, but no particular fear of the outcome. If we consider a period some six years later, when Prithvinarayan Shah delivered the discourses that have been preserved for us as the Dibya Upadesh, we find him referring to this invasion in terms that make it quite clear that his concern lay less with the British army moving into the hills than with those who had summoned British military aid ⁴⁰. Perhaps this is an indicator for our study of his relations with the Company in the years between 1767 and 1775.

4. Nepal-Company Relations--1769-75

Nepal-Company relations in the years that followed Kinloch's unsuccessful attempt to come to the aid of the beleaguered Newar kings of the Valley reflect both the unsettled state of affairs within the Company and the confusion existing among the minor hill rajas as a result of the growth of Gorkhali power. It is a known fact that in the first flush of their victory over the Mughuls at Buxar the servants of the Company got completely out of hand. They abused their new immunity from control, used their share of the victory spoils as capital for a heavy increase of private trade, and in general tried their best to improve their own personal fortunes at the expense of the Company and the people of North India. The increase in personal remittances through the Company to London was so sharp that it caused a major financial crisis in the Company that led directly to parliamentary intervention in the Company's affairs ⁴¹. At the same time the unrest that swept the Himalayan states affected the Tarai areas, and those districts on the northern border of the Bengal subah that came into contact with the Nepal Tarai experienced a sharp increase in border raids. The atmosphere in both Bengal and the Nepal Tarai in the period we are discussing was thus one of general confusion.

Naturally the documents of this period reflect this confusion. Records of individual events are inadequate to form a fair picture of what was actually happening, and even the vague picture the records do present is further distorted by the fact that few Nepali documents have come to light that would allow us to attempt a balanced reconstruction on the basis of combined Nepali and British sources. The Company's records, taken alone, seem to indicate that the Company had no clear policy regarding the northern

districts of Bengal and the Nepal Tarai for much of this period. The authorities apparently considered each complaint or each proposal to interfere in the hills on its own merit. The main criteria seem to have been the expense involved for the Company and the profit the proposition offered.

With no clear indications of policy to guide us we are thrown on the mercy of the records, and this creates a problem in methodology. A detailed survey of the documents in a study such as this will leave us with an utterly confused picture. Unrecognizable place names; distorted titles given to petitioners; confusing geographical data; and inadequate background material all conspire to obscure the real significance of the petition. It is better, I think, for our purposes to avoid detail and to concentrate on a general over-view in order to try to discern the trends in British policy. This may not be as intellectually satisfying as a detailed study might be, but in the present case it will probably give us a more coherent picture.

a. De Facto Acceptance of Prithvinarayan Shah

The most basic question to ask about this period of Nepal-Company relations is whether the British accepted the fact of Prithvinarayan Shah's conquest of Kathmandu Valley or were they still giving serious thought to the possibility of unseating him and restoring the Mallas to power. It is clear that until the Company actually accepted the fact that Prithvinarayan Shah and the Gorkhalis were in power in Kathmandu to stay, the Company would always constitute a threat to Nepal, whether the rulers of Nepal recognized this threat or not. The records tell a very interesting story.

In October 1769 James Logan, who had served as surgeon with Kinloch's amateurish expedition to Nepal, submitted a proposal to the governor of Fort William for his consideration ⁴². Logan suggested that since the Court of Directors in London wanted the Company to explore possible avenues for opening up trade with Tibet an exploration should be made through Nepal for routes for this trade ⁴³. He argued, however, that Prithvinarayan Shah would never be acceptable to the Dalai Lama and therefore any successful attempt to open the Tibet trade through Nepal should include an effort to unseat Prithvinarayan Shah. If such an attempt were made, it should be made very soon, while Jaya Prakash Malla was still there to cooperate and his followers could be pressed into service. In support of this argument he indicated that failure to support the Mallas at this time would be damaging to the Company's reputation and that in the event of the Company's intervention the Company could rely on many hill rajas who were unhappy with the turn events had taken in Kathmandu.

The Board in Calcutta accepted Logan's proposal, though not without scruple. They wrote to the Court in London that they were sending Logan to Nepal in an effort to explore new avenues of trade with Tibet, in answer to the Court's directive, but said nothing about the other aspects of Logan's mission 44. However, to Logan himself they gave not only two letters directed to Prithvinarayan Shah on the subject of increased Tibetan trade but also detailed instructions as to just what Logan should tell Jaya Prakash when they met. Logan was also provided with two letters to Karna Sen of Chaudandi, who had earlier offered support to Kinloch, and letters to five other hill rajahs. The implication was clear that the Board supported Logan's proposal to unseat Prithvinarayan Shah and sent him equipped with instructions and official letters that would help him form a conspiracy against the Gorkhali ruler. At the same time, Logan's official reason for going into Nepal was to be his effort to promote trade with the cooperation of Prithvinarayan Shah 45.

The Logan mission failed. Logan completely disappears from the records, and we have no indication of what happened to Logan himself. But his mission has some significance. Several points should be mentioned in connection with it.

1. The initiative was taken by Logan himself. Just what he hoped to gain by this mission, if he succeeded in his objectives, is not at all clear, but it was an age of adventurers and quick fortunes and perhaps he fancied himself as a miniature Clive. Or possibly Logan was still smarting from the defeat of the Kinloch mission, of which he was a member.
2. The extent of the Company's involvement was a few letters. There was no great expenditure, no back-up force, nor any great concern about his success or failure. It was an opportunity that seemed to offer some prospect of reward, and they accepted it for what it was worth.
3. The whole mission was irresponsible. One can only imagine what would have happened had the letters Logan was carrying fallen into Prithvinarayan Shah's hands, a possibility that never seems to have occurred to the Company's officers.
4. The whole mission has about it a tone of amateurishness, of lack of planning, of lack of foresight; in short it has all the marks of a government suffering from lack of direction and lack of policy--the very sort of action one would expect to come from a government passing through the period of uncertainty that the East India Company was in fact passing through at this time.

5. The significance of the Logan mission is precisely this, that it shows quite clearly that the Company had not yet arrived at a viable and stable policy towards Nepal.

There was at this time another proposal made to unseat Prithvinarayan Shah that should be mentioned here because it tends towards the same conclusion. Adbhut Singh, the son of Ranjit Malla, was in Banaras. Friends of his suggested to the British that they assist Adbhut Singh to regain the throne his father had lost in Nepal. There is scant attention given to this proposal in the records, though it is mentioned and it did have some supporters in government 46. But the support was half-hearted and non-committal. Historians will see in the Company's reaction to the Adbhut Singh proposal as well as the Logan mission that twilight zone in international affairs that lies between opposition and recognition and leads unobtrusively to de facto recognition.

b. The Settlement of the Tatar Parganas--1771

When Prithvinarayan Shah conquered Makwanpur in 1762 he also assumed possession of the Makwanpur Tarai. We should remember that the Makwanpur Tarai was not an outright possession of the raja of Makwanpur, but was held as a zamindari from the Tirhut sarkar. When Kinloch's mission to Nepal failed in 1767, he soothed his battered ego by occupying much of this territory. He had thought that the land would yield an income neighbouring on one lakh of rupees a year and thus serve to offset the losses his command had sustained. In actuality the tract proved in time to yield little over twenty thousand rupees. This income was not sufficient to warrant the military force that occupied the territory, and Kinloch's troops were withdrawn from most parts of the area. The Gorkhalis immediately repossessed themselves of the tract. Quite naturally the Company's agents in Champaran and Purnea complained about this. They argued that even though the Tatar parganas themselves had not proved fiscally worth garrisoning, the mere possession of them had helped to restore order in the districts south and west of them 47. In the face of this opposition Prithvinarayan Shah immediately set about establishing his claim to the territories and dispatched Dinanath Upadhyaya as his vakil to negotiate. Prithvinarayan Shah successfully argued that as long as he continued to pay the prescribed rent for the lands there was no reason why he should not be allowed to continue to farm them. The Board in Calcutta found on investigation that his point was well taken and agreed to his proposal. They also frankly admitted in their discussion that they were not prepared to pay the costs that an expedition against Prithvinarayan Shah would cost them, because they were quite aware that he would not give up these territories without a fight. They accepted his proposal, demanding the recognized annual payment of 12,500 rupees in elephants, the value to be reckoned according to the accepted practice in that region 48.

c. The Period of Correspondence

Between May 1773 and November 1774 Prithvinarayan Shah sent four separate letters to the governor of Fort William. All of these were prompted by his intentions to expand into the eastern Tarai in a manner that would not excite British fears. He had no intention of provoking a clash with British arms. His dealings with them in the Tatar parganas negotiations had convinced him that the Company was primarily concerned with stability in their own northern territories and that if he could persuade them that his intentions posed no threat to the peace and order of their own territories he would need have no fears of their intervention. He was fortunate in two respects. The Board in Calcutta had already looked into the nature of the disputes going on in Chaudandi, which was one of the two kingdoms Prithvinarayan Shah intended to acquire, and had decided that the Company would not interfere unless their own interests were threatened. Also, Warren Hastings arrived in Calcutta during this period. Warren Hastings was the first governor to realize that the Company's interests would be better served by attempting to cooperate with the Nepal government rather than by opposing it.

Nevertheless, it was good political sense that prompted Prithvinarayan Shah to keep the Company's government informed of his intentions. Men like Raja Partab Singh, Raja Ajit Singh, and the zamindar of Bajitpur had been in touch with the Calcutta authorities, painting the bleakest of pictures of Prithvinarayan Shah's government and encouraging the Company to cooperate with them in overthrowing him. Prithvinarayan's first letter of this series, written in May 1773, stated clearly his intentions in regard to Bijayapur and requested the Company not to intervene, since it was an internal affair. He explained that Buddhakarna Rai, the chautariya of Bijayapur, had brought about the murder of Raja Kamdatta Sen, who was closely related to Prithvinarayan Shah by marriage. His invasion of Bijayapur was thus a legitimate, punitive expedition. He proposed to assume control of the Bijayapur jagirs on the basis of his relationship with Kamdatta Sen and presented the Company with his patta for those jagirs, duly signed by the naib of Azimabad (Patna). He asked the Company as the legal successors of the Azimabad government to sign these jagirs over to him. And, of course, he requested that the Company not intervene in this personal affair 49.

The governor replied to Prithvinarayan Shah's first letter, complaining of the poor reliability of Prithvinarayan's vakils and asking him to send reliable ones. He also requested Prithvinarayan's help in stopping the incursions of sanyasis into Bengal, since it appeared that they moved through the Nepal Tarai to enter the subah. Prithvinarayan Shah replied immediately sending Dinanath Upadhyaya as his vakil to the governor, now Warren Hastings. He agreed to cooperate in the settlement of the sanyasi problem,

but pointed out that the route they took actually passed south of Nepali territory and thus his action against them would require moving further south into the Company's territories. Which, of course, he was willing to do.

The taking of Bijayapur once again alarmed the hill rajas, and again there was a spate of letters to the governor general asking the Company's assistance against Prithvinarayan Shah. The governor general sent a protest to the Nepal raja, to which Prithvinarayan Shah replied by requesting the governor general not to be prejudiced against him by the misstatements of his enemies. He also renewed his offer to pay the regular assessment on the jagirs he had taken over. The governor general was apparently satisfied by this reply but wrote that the question of assessments would have to be further discussed and that a yakil should be sent to Malda to Mr. Henchman for this purpose. But this letter was sent only on 19 January 1775, more than a week after Prithvinarayan Shah's death at Devi Ghat.

d. Summary

Brief as this period was between the Kinloch expedition and Prithvinarayan Shah's death, or, for that matter, between Buxar and the time of Prithvinarayan Shah's death, the main lines of the debate over the Company's policy towards Nepal had already taken shape. The first of these was enunciated by Mr. Ducarel in a letter to Mr. Becher in April 1770 50. He pointed out that if Morang in the Nepal Tarai were disturbed, the disturbance would carry over into the Company's territories in Purnea. On the other hand, if a strong government were established in Morang, peasants would be attracted from the Company's territories into Morang, leaving the Purnea zamindars without labour for the land. Both of these possibilities were undesirable. To counteract them, he proposed to move forces into Morang, station sepoys in several places to control incursions from the hills, and influence the policies of the hill governments by controlling the Tarai. This argument was to resurface many times, but the main thrust of it always remained the same: control the hills by controlling the Tarai.

Warren Hastings' position was totally opposed to this. The policy he adopted was expressed in a letter written long after Prithvinarayan Shah's death, but it accurately defined the position he had assumed soon after his arrival in Calcutta 51. The general thrust of his argument was: 'You have peaceful intentions, and we have peaceful intentions. Let bygones be bygones, and let us trade together'. A policy of appeasement for the sake of trade, Warren Hastings' policy governed the Company's relations with Nepal until 1804. After that time, the Ducarel argument of controlling the hills by controlling the Tarai came to the fore and led directly to the Anglo-Nepal war of 1814-16.

Neither of these policies was acceptable to Prithvinarayan Shah. He would fight for the Tarai, because the Tarai had always been an important source of revenue to the hills. But even more important, he would keep the British out of the hills, even restricting trade in order to achieve this. He saw the hills as a very strong defense against invasion, and his experience against Mir Qasim and Kinloch had proved that this was true. The strength of that defense was increased in direct proportion to his ability to keep the British ignorant of the easier routes through the hills. From the very first stages of his unification effort he adopted the policy of closing off trails into the hills and settling trusted families in key points along those that were open. Every British trader who came into Nepal would carry away some of the secrets of the hills, and this he was determined to prevent. And his reasoning was flawless. The British position in India was still not terribly secure. There were Indian forces quite capable of mounting a serious attack on them. Bombay and Madras were not important to Prithvinarayan Shah. His concern lay with the British in Bengal, and they would never hold their position on the Gangetic plain without an anchor in the hills, either north or south of the Gangetic plain. The Marathas still held the Deccan strongly. That left the hills of Nepal. He was convinced that the day might well come when the British would try to force their way into the hills in sheer self-defense, and he wanted to make that as difficult for them as possible 52. He had other reasons for restricting trade, many of them quite valid, but the basic reason was his determination to protect the hills and Nepal. In this sense, then, fear of British power in India definitely influenced his policies.

But we must not emphasise this fear too much. For one thing, the British were not strong enough at this time to mount a full-scale attack on Nepal even had they wanted to do so. But also, Prithvinarayan Shah was quite convinced that, given a determined defense of the hills, the British could be an asset. One could negotiate with them; they could be made to see the logic of a position; and they had a fetish for legal forms. Efforts to keep their friendship, within the context of his own defense policies, would pay the Nepalis well. As long as the British were friendly with the government of the new Nepal, there was little danger that they would befriend the rajas of the Nepal Tarai. And that was the eventuality to be avoided, since it was the Nepal Tarai that was the immediate object of his concern. As Nepal grew and increased its strength it had less and less to fear from the Chaubisi Rajas or any other hill rajas. But were any of the Tarai rajas to succeed in gaining an alliance with the British, the whole Gorkhali expansion equation would change. This must be prevented, and the way to prevent it was to keep the British friendly. Assure the British of their security, and their self-interest will keep them out of Nepal. Keep them friendly, and they will not ally themselves with our enemies. Keep them out of the hills, and we are

doubly safe 53. This, it seems to me, was Prithvinarayan Shah's attitude towards the British. It was positive; it was workable; and it left Nepal free to expand at will in the hills and the Nepal Tarai.

Two other lessons Prithvinarayan Shah learned in his Banaras days were applied with equal vigour. He adamantly refused to share his rule with his collaterals, even though his own brothers made a strong case for their right to a portion of the new Nepal as an appanage 54. Prithvinarayan Shah decided it was destructive of unity and refused to humour them. His decision, communicated tersely and uncompromisingly, was final. Secondly, all holders of jagirs were subjected to an annual accounting of their stewardship. All jagir owners were subject to annual reappointment, and a regular change of jagirs became a part of the administrative system he set up 55. In their own way, these reactions to what he had learned of the weaknesses in both the Mughul and Maratha systems were to have a more profound effect on the unification of Nepal than Prithvinarayan's reaction to the growth of British power in India. Unity is essentially an internal achievement, and any unity structured on reaction to external forces is at best precarious.

B. Pratap Singh Shah and the Regency Period

Prithvinarayan Shah died in January 1775. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Pratap Singh Shah, who ruled for about two and a half years before his premature death in November 1777. Pratap Singh Shah was then succeeded by Rana Bahadur Shah, his two-and-a-half year old son. This necessitated a long regency period during which Rajendra Laxmi and Bahadur Shah served as regents. Rana Bahadur assumed control of the Government in 1795, a few years after he had reached his majority, and ruled until 1799, when he abdicated in favour of his own infant son Girbanayuddha Bikram Shah. It is convenient for the purposes of this study to consider this period as a unit, even though three separate successors to the throne and two regents directed the course of events in Nepal during this time. The period we intend to discuss in this section, then, extends from 1775 to 1799, corresponding to the period from Warren Hastings to Wellesley in India.

1. Changes in Nepal and the Company

In India a vast transformation was taking place. Under Warren Hastings the Company stepped forth as diwan and began to rule directly the states under its control. His vigorous prosecution of the Maratha and Mysore wars broke the back of the Nizam's anti-British coalition in the south and pitted the British against Mysore alone. Cornwallis hammered home the British victory over Mysore, then turned his energies to reform of the Company's administration. Shore continued this work, so that by the time

Welllesley arrived in India the Company's position in India was secure and the Company had an administrative system adequate to exercise effective control over its territories. Government was more centralized. Policies were more clearly defined. And power was becoming less a means of survival and more an instrument of rule. The changes taking place in the Company were gradual, but by the end of this period they would be largely complete.

In Nepal this period is characterized by a steady expansion of the Gorkhali state, so that by the end of this period the area under direct Gorkhali rule and considered part of Nepal stretched from the Teesta in the east to Kumaon in the west. During this period, also, Nepal fought a preliminary war with Tibet and then a major war with China. In terms of Nepal-Company relations, this was the period of Abdul Qadir Khan's mission to Nepal, the Nepal-Company commercial treaty of 1792, and the Kirkpatrick mission of 1793. It was a period, then, of very great expansion in Nepal and of a regularizing and strengthening of the Company's government in India. If we are to find that fear of the British played a role in Nepal's unification, some signs of this fear should become apparent during this period.

2. Pratap Singh Shah

In 1775, at the very beginning of Pratap Singh's reign, Pratap Singh exiled his younger brother Bahadur Shah from Nepal. Bahadur Shah went first to the Chaubisi Rajas, which were at this time still outside the boundaries of the Gorkhali state, and then travelled to Bettiah in Champaran district of Bihar. This exile is important because Bahadur Shah was a very vigorous and intelligent individual, and his presence in the Company's territories provided the British with the classic opening for interference in the internal politics of Nepal. Fortunately we have an extensive correspondence between the court of Kathmandu and Bahadur Shah to guide our interpretation of the events that followed Bahadur Shah's exile ⁵⁶. We know from this correspondence that Bahadur Shah was friendly with both the Capuchins in Champaran district and with the British, and that on at least one occasion he met Warren Hastings. The correspondence reveals not only Pratap Singh's knowledge of these contacts but also his approval of them, thereby indicating that Pratap Singh had no special fear of British intervention on the basis of Bahadur Shah's friendship with them. During this period, also, negotiations with the Company's government for Nepali control of the Bijayapur-Chaudandi Tarai continued and were concluded to the satisfaction of both parties.

3. Rajendra Laxmi

During the regency of Pratap Singh's widow, Rajendra Laxmi, however, a note of concern is injected into the correspondence between the court and Bahadur Shah. The Gorkhali armies in 1780 were

still seriously troubled by the larger states of the Chaubisi Rajas, and the court of Nepal was agitated by the news received from their agents in the Chaubisi territories that the leading rajas had resolved to seek British assistance and had raised money with which to purchase British arms and ammunition. One Kanaknidhi Tiwari had gone to India with two or three thousand rupees to see what could be done to gain British assistance and to make the purchases 57. In late January 1781 a letter was sent to Bahadur Shah in Bettiah informing him of this and asking him to use whatever influence he had with the Company's authorities to prevent this sale and to discourage the British from supplying troops to support the Chaubisi 58.

Two weeks later another letter was written on the same subject, notifying Bahadur Shah that information received in Kathmandu had indicated that Kanaknidhi and his companions had arrived in Patna and then gone on to Calcutta. Bahadur Shah was asked to come to Kathmandu along with the Kathmandu vakil from Patna, or, if his health should prevent such a trip, to give whatever special news he might have on this affair to the vakil and send him immediately 59.

These two letters reflect the same basic concern that Prithvinarayan Shah showed in his correspondence with the Company in 1773 and 1774. The court in Kathmandu was alive to the possibility that one of the hill rajas might succeed in gaining British support for his cause. This suggests the superficial conclusion that the court in Kathmandu was afraid that the hill rajas in alliance with the Company might constitute an insuperable barrier to the attainment of Gorkhali objectives. It also suggests, however, another and deeper concern that the British would agree to 'countenance' a hill raja--to afford him their protection--and once the British were insinuated into hill politics in this way, they might come to exercise a controlling hand in Himalayan affairs. Of the two possibilities, it is to the latter, the desire to keep the British out of Himalayan politics, that I incline. I believe that Prithvinarayan Shah made it very clear both in his personal dealings with the British and in his Dibya Upadesh that British entry into the hills was an evil to be avoided at all costs, so much so that he subordinated all of his trade contacts with India to this exigency. This same concern, the exclusion of the British from regional affairs and disputes, had already appeared in the Peshwa's court at Pune, and I think we have in this correspondence a clear indication that the court of Kathmandu was equally alive to the dangers of British involvement. It is difficult to assess the element of fear in the court's attitudes. This I admit. The court was well aware of the danger of British interposition, and where there is danger there is usually fear. But it seems to me that the basic fear in this instance is less of British power than of Himalayan ignorance. As I see it, the court in Kathmandu was concerned that hill rajas with no great understanding of the state of affairs maintaining in North

India might succeed in convincing an otherwise reluctant governor general that it would be worth his while to send troops to 'protect' a hill raja. Invariably where this happened the troops remained, the precarious balance of power was upset, and in the effort to impose some stability on affairs the British position became permanent. At this point in history the British in themselves posed no great threat to Nepal. Should they be introduced into the hills, however, their very presence would become a catalyst for change in the power structure. Change would be accompanied by profound confusion, and this would spur the British, with their obsession for security, to impose order on the hill peoples. The situation, however, posed a dilemma. How does one keep the British out of someone else's kingdom?

The solution found for this dilemma was the same one that Prithvinarayan Shah had adopted and used with success. Isolate the hill rajas. Do this through friendship with the British. Rely on the British preoccupation for acquiring the legal right to trade to determine their policy. Above all, make no move that would seem to threaten the Company's existing arrangements. It was a realistic assessment of the problem, especially at this period. Despite its vastly increased power and resources, the Company had sufficient problems of its own in India. It was reasonable to believe, and the Nepali vakils continued to insist on it, that the British were willing to live and let live as far as Nepal was concerned; that of themselves they had no great desire to intervene. The circumstances, therefore, called for increased friendship with the Company, but friendship on the same terms as those laid down by Prithvinarayan Shah, friendship without British penetration into the hills even for commercial purposes.

4. Bahadur Shah

One might argue that 'friendship without involvement' was impossible. One could cite the Nepal-Company commercial treaty of 1792 as proof that friendship led directly to a policy of gradually opening doors. Strong support for this position is certainly to be found in the history of that treaty. It was preceded by the usual letters and gifts as well as by the effort to win the friendship of influential Nepalis. The treaty proposal was then made. Influential Nepalis put pressure on the court. And finally the court accepted the treaty ⁶⁰. There is a beautiful simplicity about this argument that commends it, and many of the documents connected with the treaty lend themselves to such an interpretation of events.

I cannot accept such an interpretation, however, because it takes the treaty out of context. It ignores the actual terms of the treaty as well as contemporary developments in western Nepal and in Tibet. I think that any historian who considers the treaty in the context of Nepal's problems at that time will readily agree

that the treaty was a consistent step in Nepal's policy toward the Company and that it definitely was not a question of Bahadur Shah's succumbing to the inherent pressures of his friendship with the British.

In the years between 1788 and 1792 Bahadur Shah had succeeded in putting Nepal in a position that rather staggers the imagination. For one thing, he swept through the western hills of Nepal at bewildering speed and brought Nepal's armies to the Alakananda river west of Kumaon before they paused 61. This in itself constituted a serious danger to Nepal. It is true that Nepal's armies had control of the area. But the control was spread very thin, and it would take years to develop the military strength necessary to hold the conquered territories securely. Administrative problems also abounded. The nature of many of the conquests obliged the regent to develop a completely new aspect of the administration. Where local rajas had accepted Gorkhali rule, Bahadur Shah had allowed them to remain in control of the local government 62. But in order to prevent them from becoming a disruptive force within the country, these local rajas had to be closely supervised and constantly reminded that the centre was ready and willing to depose them the moment they stepped out of line.

At the same time, many of the defeated rajas had taken up residence inside the Company's territories. The more powerful of them turned immediately to the Company and actively sought British alliance and support 63. These men constituted a triple danger. They still commanded the loyalty of at least some of their former subjects. They were also thoroughly familiar with the weaknesses in the hill defenses as well as the strength of the hills. If they were successful in their effort to gain British intervention, Nepal could no longer rely on the secrecy of the hill trails as a factor in the defense of the hills. Far more important, however, than either of these two dangers was the possibility that these deposed rajas might succeed with British support in detaching the Tarai portions of their former kingdoms and bringing these territories under British protection with themselves as zamindars. Without the Tarai the conquest of the hills was barren. Such action on their part would lead directly to the old Ducarel argument that one could control the hills by controlling the Tarai. This was dangerous, because it was true. And this, possibly more than anything else, Bahadur Shah had to avoid.

Also during this same period, the languishing condition of Nepal's Tibetan trade forced Bahadur Shah to intervene directly in Tibetan affairs. Bahadur Shah took the normal precautions of informing the governor general of his intentions before setting his army in motion, asking him not to provide the Tibetans with assistance if the Tibetans approached him for it. His intervention succeeded, at least temporarily, and Bahadur Shah achieved the sort of currency arrangements with Tibet that would facilitate trade. But Bahadur Shah had been badly deceived about the true

state of affairs in Lhasa. Whether because of bad advice or poor evaluation of the advice he received, he had apparently misunderstood Chinese policies in Lhasa, confusing a lack of regular Chinese intervention in Tibetan affairs with the inability of the Chinese to intervene. As a result of this miscalculation, Bahadur Shah suddenly found himself threatened by almost overwhelming Chinese forces. I want to point out here that these forces were already in Tibet preparing for the invasion of Nepal when Abdul Qadir Khan came to Kathmandu to negotiate the treaty ⁶⁴. It has been suggested, and I think rightly so, that Abdul Qadir Khan suggested rather strongly that if the treaty were signed the Company might more readily come to Bahadur Shah's assistance in the event of a full-scale Chinese invasion. Certainly, within a few months of the signing of the treaty, Bahadur Shah requested military assistance from the governor general in a manner that indicates complete confidence that his request would be favourably received. I do not deny that enormous pressures to sign the treaty were exerted on Bahadur Shah. Gajraj Misra himself was one of the principal advocates of the treaty, and Bahadur Shah was deeply indebted to him. But I am insisting that Bahadur Shah also had abundant reason for encouraging British friendship at this particular point in history. He had to balance his tenuous hold on western Nepal with the Chinese threat. And he did it by the least expensive means he had at hand. He accepted the treaty that Duncan had written and Abdul Qadir Khan had brought to Kathmandu.

The price for this continued British friendship was not great. The treaty itself, except for Article Six, indicates nothing very strikingly new in Nepal-Company relations beyond the desire of the Company to have a fixed customs rate for goods taken from India into Nepal and a desire to do away with the practice of charging customs duties at several points along the trail on the same goods. It was a standard treaty already offered to others of the Company's neighbours as a part of Cornwallis' efforts to simplify the administrative structure ⁶⁵. Since no special class of traders is indicated in the treaty, the assumption is that the clauses of the treaty were intended to apply to those who were already carrying on trade between the Company's territories and Nepal. It did not, therefore, introduce British merchants into the hills nor increase the activity of Indian merchants in Nepal. Article Six looks suspiciously like an effort on the part of one of those involved in drawing up the official copies of the treaty to include a concession that the British would find especially attractive. According to the English version of the treaty, goods exported to Nepal and left unsold could then be re-exported to any other country beyond the limits of Nepal, without further payment of duty. This obviously would open the way to the Tibet trade for the Company. They would have only to overload the Nepali market, then reship the unsold goods to Tibet. However, the Nepali and English versions of the wording of the treaty differ essentially in Article Six, and the Nepali version states simply that without payment

of further duties the unsold goods could be shipped back to the original exporting country. The difference in the two versions has never been satisfactorily explained, and we do not know today which of the two versions was actually intended. Apart from this discrepancy, the treaty is a straight-forward attempt to regularize the trade that already existed between Nepal and the Company's territories. Signing, even had it been done under pressure, was thus an act of friendship that fell well within the boundaries set for such a friendship by Prithvinarayan Shah himself.

As I have mentioned earlier, within a very few months after the signing of the commercial treaty with the Company, Bahadur Shah requested military assistance from the governor general. This request was made in the context of China's invasion of Nepal, and the amount of aid requested is a gauge of the seriousness of that invasion. His original request in August 1792 was for ten guns and ten European artillery officers ⁶⁶. This was modified in September by a second request calling for two battalions of Europeans and two battalions of sepoys, complete with military stores and a suitable number of guns ⁶⁷.

The aid was never sent. Lord Cornwallis, pleading his country's close trade connections with China as an excuse, offered instead to send a mediator to help settle the dispute. Kirkpatrick was appointed for this, and Kathmandu was so informed. The war, however, had already been settled before Kirkpatrick set out, and Bahadur Shah made an effort to block Kirkpatrick's coming to Nepal. Kirkpatrick was informed when he reached Azimabad (Patna) that the war was over, that his services would not be needed, and that he should not continue his journey to Nepal ⁶⁸. This order was subsequently and abruptly changed. Bahadur Shah sent two agents to meet Kirkpatrick at Patna, then, in response to their suggestion, asked Kirkpatrick to come to Nepal. On his arrival in Nepal Kirkpatrick was treated with great courtesy and had an audience with the king, but he very soon realized that there was nothing for him to do in Nepal and that his presence was not wanted there. His advances for further development of such contacts were countered by the age-old rejoinder that though Bahadur Shah and many in the court were decidedly sympathetic, the fact was that the time was not suitable for increased British contact with Nepal. Kirkpatrick then returned to India.

I have mentioned these two events because they seem to some historians to indicate that Bahadur Shah's policy was not in line with the policies of his predecessors, and that Bahadur Shah was more a friend of the British than he was of Nepal. 'If Bahadur Shah was so anxious to keep the British out of the hills, why did he request their aid and why did he permit Kirkpatrick to come to the hills when there was no longer any semblance of an excuse for his coming?' This is the sort of argument one hears in accusation of Bahadur Shah. Such a misunderstanding is possible only when these events are taken out of context.

The request for British military aid against the Chinese was made in a moment of crisis, and the very fact that it was made at all indicates the dimensions of the threat that the Chinese invasion represented to Nepal. It was the most serious threat that Nepal had ever known from the north, and as the size of Fu-k'ang-an's operation became known, there was reason to doubt that the Nepali forces would be adequate to repel him. On the eve of the decisive battle of Nuwakot, when Abdul Qadir Khan wrote to Duncan in Banaras describing the atmosphere in Kathmandu, there was desperation in the air ⁶⁹. It was a time when men grabbed at straws and unusual measures were commonplace. And in such an atmosphere the word intervention lost its meaning. The British were called on because policy must always yield to bare survival, and that apparently was what Nepal was fighting for. The Nepali victory at Nuwakot came as a blessed relief from relentless Chinese pressure. But it must also have come as a great surprise to the Nepalis as much as to the Chinese. It was one of those victories that turns night into day and despair into hope. But it could not have been foreseen. I should interject here that those historians who have passed lightly over this moment and credit the Chinese withdrawal solely to Gorkhali willingness to negotiate in order to save Kathmandu have little concept either of the hardships under which the Chinese forces were labouring in their encampment or the strategic importance of Nuwakot. Had the Chinese been able to take Nuwakot and march onwards to Kathmandu Valley, they would most certainly have done so. In Kathmandu there was everything they lacked. There was food. There was safety from the aul fever. There was security for the coming winter. They did not reach Kathmandu because they were turned back by a magnificent eleventh-hour defense by the Gorkhali troops. But the brilliance of the Gorkhali performance in this battle cannot erase the anxiety that preceded it. And it is in this context of anxiety that we must understand Bahadur Shah's call for British help.

The Kirkpatrick mission is very easily explained. Kirkpatrick had been told in plain language that he should not advance further. Bahadur Shah wrote it, and he meant it. The softening of this attitude has nothing at all to do with a change in his thinking. He was told in no uncertain terms by Gajraj Misra that he could not act this way, and that if he did not permit Kirkpatrick to come to Nepal after all his preparations, he, Gajraj Misra, would have nothing further to do with him. Gajraj Misra was not just another Brahman to Bahadur Shah. Gajraj Misra was his guru and the benefactor who, not once, but twice had secured Bahadur Shah's release from confinement. There was no one in Nepal who had the influence over Bahadur Shah that Gajraj Misra had. Knowing this, the impact Gajraj Misra's letter--quoted here from the Calendar of Persian Correspondence summary--had on Bahadur Shah was entirely predictable.

Gajraj Misra to the Raja of Nepal. Acknowledges receipt of the Raja's letter dated 6 Katik (19 October 1792) received by him on 19 Katik (1 November 1792) along with letters addressed to his lordship, Mr. Duncan, and Ali Ibrahim Khan. Mr. Duncan has sent to his lordship the translation of the Raja's letter to the writer along with the Raja's letter to his lordship. The writer was intending to proceed to Nepal but on the receipt of the Raja's letter Mr. Duncan asked the writer to wait till his lordship replied to the Raja's last letter. Says that through his mediation the work has gone on perfectly well and a commercial treaty has been concluded to the satisfaction of both the Governments as a result of which the English have begun to consider the Raja their friend and ally. As such, on the Raja's recent request for their help against the Chinese, Mr. Duncan, at the request of the writer, forwarded the Raja's application to the Council. The English are on good terms with the Chinese but in consideration of the Raja's friendship the Council decided to send a gentleman of rank along with four companies of sepoys. Accordingly the gentleman (Maulavi Abdul Qadir Khan) proceeded to Nepal to negotiate a peace between the Raja and the Chinese emperor. The Company, at considerable expense, had already dispatched this contingent which had even come up to Patna solely for the Raja's welfare when suddenly the Raja's letter saying that as the war was over 'the gentlemen should not put themselves to the trouble' held them up. The use of such an expression is not becoming of the Raja; nor is it becoming to write all that in so abrupt a manner. Even though the Raja had written to the writer to visit Nepal in the winter season and take the 'gentleman' with him, which the writer has already communicated to Mr. Duncan, yet it is not sufficient. The writer advises the Raja to write to his lordship to this effect and to request him to send Capt. Kirkpatrick to Nepal on the footing of friendship adding that the Raja would receive the Captain at Kathmandu and entertain him well during his stay there. It is necessary in the interest of the Raja himself to keep the English satisfied. The writer is the guru of the Raja and as such asks him to act as suggested. Should the Raja fail to comply, the writer would also 'give him up entirely' 70.

But, though Bahadur Shah yielded to Gajraj Misra, his intuition was right. Kirkpatrick's coming did weaken Nepal. His comments on the routes to Kathmandu were eagerly studied by the British in 1814 on the eve of the Anglo-Nepal war, 71 and this fact tends to prove the soundness of Nepal's basic policy. Keep the British out of the hills. Be friends with them. But keep them out of the hills.

5. Rana Bahadur Shah

In 1795 Rana Bahadur Shah set aside his uncle, Bahadur Shah, and began to rule Nepal himself. Nepal had come safely out of the Chinese danger, and there was leisure to consolidate the conquests made during the regency of Bahadur Shah. And the times called for consolidation. For in India the nature of the Company was undergoing a subtle change. The Company had slowly achieved stability under Warren Hastings and Cornwallis. Some of the major defects in the Government of India Act 1773 were ironed out, and the Company's government began to function more efficiently. Tipu Sultan had been defeated, and the Company annexed territory that gave them an overland connection between the Bengal and the Madras presidencies. The governor of Bengal had become governor general in fact as well as in name, and there was far more coordination in the Company's policies. With the arrival of Wellesley the Company began to pursue its goal of security in new directions. There was an effort to rationalize borders, to set up buffer zones, and to disarm the native states by a policy of subsidiarity. Perhaps most important, an effort was made to set up the Company as the mediator between the native states in all matters, to channel communications from one to the other through the Company and thereby to monitor their plans and policies. Pivotal in this new series of developments was the role of the resident at native courts. The resident was the on-the-spot expert who kept the governor general informed through frequent, at times daily, reports of the slightest change in the political atmosphere of the court to which he was assigned. He was a powerful figure in any court because, for the local raja, all access to the governor general was through the resident. And, since the resident supplied the information necessary for decisions to the governor general and actually mediated those decisions to the local raja, often with great latitude for his own discretion, his opinion, his comments, and his advice assumed great importance in the court. If a court agreed to accept a British subsidiary force, first as an augment to its own army then as a substitute, the resident's power increased tremendously. To the point, in fact, where he was very nearly the actual ruler--and as far as the Company's government was concerned, he was treated as the actual ruler. The concept of a resident at a local court and even the concept of subsidiary forces taken in themselves were dangerous, but not overly so. It was when these two ideas were joined to Wellesley's drive for rational boundaries, true buffer states, and secure boundaries that the way was opened to exploit both of these to the detriment of local self-rule. When this power was further expanded by deliberately isolating the local rajas from one another, the day of British paramountcy had dawned in India.

But in Nepal there was apparently little awareness of this change in the Company. The Company was still a trading company that had acquired the powers of government in large stretches of

India. It had power. It had well-trained armies. It had adequate, and at times excellent, leadership. But the Company had not posed a real threat to Nepal since 1767, and even that was largely discounted both because memories fade and because Nepal herself had expanded so greatly. Without a thought for the possible implications of his act, then, Rana Bahadur abdicated in 1799 in favour of his infant son Girbanayuddha Bikram Shah. His act left Nepal without a mature leader at a time when leadership was so desperately needed and necessarily opened the way for factionalism in Kathmandu.

To further confuse the issue, within a year of his abdication Rana Bahadur began to regret what his actions had done to his own position in government and made a desperate attempt to regain at least some of the power that he had abandoned. But he had done his job too well. He had made his abdication as thorough a piece of work as he could make it, and it held even against his own pressures. In the confusion that accompanied his attempt to rule without being king he found the forces arrayed against him more than he could prudently face, and quite suddenly he left Nepal for Banaras. In voluntary exile in Banaras Rana Bahadur could plan his next moves in safety, or so he thought. And thus began what I consider the period of Nepalese history that was most dangerous to the independence of Nepal.

Hardly had Rana Bahadur settled down in Banaras when the British began to sift the situation to see what profit they could find in it for themselves ⁷². The possibilities were apparently endless. Rana Bahadur himself was petitioning their aid in regaining the power he had so thoughtlessly abdicated. This was one British opportunity, and it was a good one. Any British force attempting to restore Rana Bahadur to power would have succeeded because few in Nepal would actually have taken arms against the ex-rajā. Another British opportunity was to use Rana Bahadur's presence in Banaras as a lever to pry concessions out of the court in Kathmandu. This was also an excellent opportunity.

The court in Kathmandu was in a serious position. If anyone in Kathmandu was doubtful about the matter, these doubts were dispelled when Gajraj Misra came to Kathmandu to explain the situation to them. Gajraj Misra was Rana Bahadur's vakil in Banaras, and he knew very well what Rana Bahadur was willing to concede to the British in return for their help and what Rana Bahadur had already written to the governor general. On the positive side Gajraj Misra also knew that the British were still smarting from the fact that Nepal had steadfastly ignored the commercial treaty of 1792 and that they wanted a resident in Kathmandu. He urged the court in Kathmandu to give them this much and he thought that he could avert an invasion of Nepal to restore Rana Bahadur to power. The court accepted his proposals and empowered him to work out a treaty along these lines with the Company. Gajraj Misra abandoned Rana

Bahadur and proceeded to negotiate in the name of the Kathmandu court with the Company's representative, William Knox. A treaty was agreed to and ratified by both Calcutta and Kathmandu. The Kathmandu court achieved the isolation of Rana Bahadur, and the British gained an agreement to implement the commercial treaty of 1792 and the acceptance of a resident in Kathmandu itself.

The treaty of October 1801 was a very unsatisfactory treaty. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that it was based on fear of British military intervention in Nepal. The Nepalis hated it and had accepted it because it was the lesser of the evils. The British accepted the treaty, though they realized its weakness, because it promised them the thin end of the wedge by which they could open the heart of Nepal ⁷³. Every Nepali involved in negotiating it and fulfilling its terms knew that he was laying himself open to the charge of violating a primary principle of foreign relations as set down by Prithvinarayan Shah himself. But the fear of other and greater evils drove them to an act that would brand them for life.

As a matter of fact, the treaty failed. The resident was withdrawn. Rana Bahadur Shah returned to Kathmandu and to the control of the powers of the throne, if not to the throne itself. The danger of 1800 was forgotten, but by one of those strange twists so common in history anyone who had been connected in any way with the treaty of 1801 was remembered in history as pro-British and held suspect. Anachronistically, the pro-British label with its implications was also applied to anyone who had encouraged friendship with the British before or after, in complete oblivion of both the fact that friendship with the British was a principle that Prithvinarayan Shah had acted on and had enjoined on the government of Nepal in his Dibya Upadesh and the fact that the treaty itself had been accepted as a means of extricating Nepal from a very precarious position.

C. The Bhim Sen Thapa Period

The final period we must consider to complete our study is the period from 1804 to 1816. In Nepal this period covers most of the reign of Girbanayuddha Bikram Shah. The principal personages on the Nepal scene were Rana Bahadur Shah, Bhim Sen Thapa, and Kazi Amar Singh Thapa. In the Company's government Wellesley, Cornwallis, Barlow, Minto, and Hastings served as governors general. This is the period of Nepal's expansion through Garhwal, the Athara Thakurai and the Barha Thakurai as well as the siege of Kot Kangra, where Nepali armies clashed with Ranjit Singh of the Punjab. The period begins with Rana Bahadur's return from Banaras and ends with the Anglo-Nepal war and the ratification by Nepal of the Treaty of Sagauli.

Rana Bahadur Shah returned from his exile in Banaras in 1804, accompanied by Bhim Sen Thapa, who had by this time become his principal adviser. But Rana Bahadur's return did not mark the final failure of Wellesley's attempt to extract some advantage from the whole exile episode. Wellesley had expected on the basis of Rana Bahadur's conduct in 1799 and 1800 that Rana Bahadur's return to Kathmandu would be such a traumatic experience for the Kathmandu durbar that the governor general would be called upon to mediate between the various factions in the court of Nepal. This did not happen. The various factions did not cease to exist, but they apparently had learned that unbridled maneuvering for political position in Kathmandu was an open invitation to British intervention. They had narrowly escaped from such intervention during the period of Rana Bahadur's exile, and they now closed ranks sufficiently to frustrate the governor general's strategy for Nepal. It is true that several of Rana Bahadur's principal opponents were put to death, but nowhere was there the general unrest that the governor general had anticipated. Rana Bahadur allowed his son to remain on the throne, while he himself quietly became the power behind the throne. Kazi Amar Singh Thapa was given orders to resume the westward conquest, and the energies of the nobility as well as the military were focussed on further westward expansion.

In 1806, just a few months after he had had himself proclaimed as mukhtiyar, or chief minister, Rana Bahadur Shah was unaccountably assassinated. In violent reaction to this Bhim Sen Thapa had a number of the leading nobles put to death and with them the raja of Palpa, who was at that time in detention in Kathmandu. Bhim Sen Thapa also took control of Palpa and the Palpa Tarai, and thereby came into direct confrontation with the Company.

Palpa held a part of its Tarai possessions as zamindari. It had received this grant first from the nawab vazir of Avadh, but after the cession of this part of Avadh to the Company in 1801, ownership of the Palpa Tarai went over to the Company. Despite the change in ownership, Palpa continued to hold the zamindari but paid its annual assessment to the Company. When Nepal assumed control of the Palpa Tarai, a pro forma letter was sent to the governor general requesting that the zamindari rights be made over to Nepal under the same conditions under which Palpa had enjoyed them. This had been the standing agreement in both the Makwanpur Tarai and the Bijayapur-Chaudandi Tarai from Prithvinarayan Shah's time, and Bhim Sen Thapa saw no difficulty in the same formula being applied in the Palpa Tarai. He was, however, refused ⁷⁴. This was the turning point in the Company's Nepal policy. From the time of Warren Hastings the Company had consistently followed a Nepal policy of friendship bordering on appeasement. All border disputes during this period had been settled peacefully through negotiation. From 1806 onwards the Company's policy becomes rigid, suspicious, and insistent on the Company's rights. This certainly was a signal to Bhim Sen Thapa. The question is, did he interpret it correctly?

While he was in Banaras with Rana Bahadur, Bhim Sen Thapa had had an excellent opportunity to observe the British at work at a time when they were carrying out some extremely clever maneuvers. He saw its effects. He saw the way the Company grew, the way it compounded its strength by a skilful use of Indian mercenaries and officials. And he was sufficiently impressed to fear the British. However, in my mind, Bhim Sen Thapa's problem was that he feared the British too much and he feared them too little. And this led him into a war that proved the most costly that Nepal has ever fought.

Bhim Sen Thapa feared the British too much because he became convinced that sooner or later the British would make their move into Nepal. He had seen them trying for years to place a resident in Nepal, which could be interpreted as the first step towards subsidiarity and loss of independence. He saw growing British frustration with Nepal's trade policies. Perhaps more important, as the Company became more and more a government and less a trading establishment, he saw its increasing concern for safe borders. Rightly or wrongly, Bhim Sen Thapa concluded from this personal observation that war with the British was inevitable, and he interpreted the British action in regard to the Palpa Tarai as the first indication that war would not be long delayed. When the principle of limitation ⁷⁵ was communicated to him in 1813 by the governor general, it could only have appeared to Bhim Sen Thapa as the emergence of the Ducarel position as official Company policy towards Nepal and confirmed his conviction what was was unabordable.

At the same time, Bhim Sen Thapa feared the British too little. At this stage of the Company's development in India, the superiority of British administration had begun to make itself felt. The British were well on their way to solving the problems of government communication in India in a way that no other Indian power had ever done. Nowhere does this superiority appear more forcefully than in Bhim Sen Thapa's effort to form an alliance between Nepal, the Marathas, and Ranjit Singh. The information Bhim Sen Thapa received was outdated even before it came into his hands and was often misleading. The governor general, on the other hand, often knew through his residents in different courts what was being planned in those courts long before their plans passed from the discussion stage. And he acted accordingly. The Marathas were isolated from any possible alliance with Nepal before the first shot of the war was fired ⁷⁶. And the isolation of the Marathas proved a decisive factor in defeating Bhim Sen Thapa's strategy.

Bhim Sen Thapa also underestimated the Company's war machine. His assessment of the Company's fighting strength was correct as far as manpower was concerned. The Gorkhali was definitely a superior mountain soldier to any that came against him. He was also

right in his assessment of the inability of the British commanders to penetrate the mountains of Nepal. But surprisingly, for a military man who had had three years and more to observe such things at close range, he completely underestimated the effectiveness of British artillery and the ability of British engineers to move their artillery even through mountainous terrain 77.

At this stage I am not sure whether a man like Bhim Sen Thapa was capable of reacting in any other way than he did. He was a military man who, to my knowledge, never exercised actual field command. He was the effective ruler of Nepal and therefore commander of a military machine that had made unprecedented victories in the hills. He was riding on the crest of enthusiasm that only such victories can create. But he had no actual experience as a commander in the field to temper this enthusiasm. Given his understanding of the British, I suspect, though I would like to reserve final judgment on this to a later date, that Bhim Sen Thapa took the only course that appeared open to him.

Unwilling as I am to venture an assessment of Bhim Sen Thapa's ability as a leader in Nepal at this time, I am convinced that I am right in concluding that he feared the British too little and too much. He was not a Prithvinarayan Shah. He was not able to grasp, even from extended observation, the nature of the Company. He was not able to realize that the Company had not only grown in size but that its very nature had changed. He was not able to realize that the Company was fast becoming a government in a sense that was completely new to India. Whatever its faults and failings in regard to the welfare of the ruled, the Company was mastering the sheer geographical problems of ruling India that had contributed so heavily to the defeat of the Afghans, the Mughuls, and the Marathas. It was a Company that presented new problems that demanded new approaches and new policies. Successful dealing with the Company required new alternatives to the older attitudes towards the Company. It was no longer a question of security of trade that dominated the Company's thinking, but security of boundaries, security of its ryots, and security of revenue. The Company had grown in status from that of an interloper on the Indian scene to that of the 'Establishment', and any state that wished to live in peace with the Company would have to reshape its policies accordingly.

In The Rise of the House of Gorkha I have analyzed Bhim Sen Thapa's assessment of the British and the causes of the Anglo-Nepal war of 1814-16. I concluded there that Bhim Sen Thapa gambled on the outcome of his strategy and that his strategy could well have proved to be successful. These conclusions I still hold quite strongly. The point at issue here is not Bhim Sen Thapa's strategy nor his assessment of British intentions in the period immediately preceding the War. It is the intervening period that is significant in the present context. The period from the Kirkpatrick mission in 1793 to Rana Bahadur's exile in 1800 indicates a

strong British thrust for a more secure accommodation with Nepal. In the period from 1800 to 1804 this thrust became more pronounced when the governor general began to initiate moves to secure his objectives in Nepal. The period from 1804 to 1810 is the period when Warren Hastings' policy towards Nepal was abandoned and the Ducarel position became more attractive to the Company's government, indicated by the hardening of the British position and the growing intransigence in their attitude towards Nepal. It is precisely at this period, then, that a reassessment of the Company was required. A basic adaptation in Nepal's policy was needed, because one of the key assumptions on which that policy had been based was no longer true. Prithvinarayan Shah had recognized that the Company in his time had been concerned about security of trade and that as long as Nepal represented no threat to that security she would have little to fear from the Company. But with the passing years this had radically changed. The Company was concerned in Bhim Sen Thapa's time with security of borders, and the very existence of a strong Nepal constituted a threat to that security unless adequate treaties were established between Nepal and the Company and scrupulously observed. Bhim Sen Thapa did not see this, and Nepal paid the price. What was needed was another Prithvinarayan Shah. Bhim Sen Thapa did not measure up to that standard, but, then, who in Nepal has?

Conclusions

I set myself the goal in this study to review the question posed by Yadu Nath Khanal on the role that fear of the British played in the unification of Nepal. I have reviewed the period of the unification of Nepal with this as the focal point. It is time now to draw some conclusions.

First, there was definitely a 'fear' of the British from the days of Prithvinarayan Shah to those of Bhim Sen Thapa, but I insist on qualifying that expression 'fear'. I do not think that Prithvinarayan Shah had any direct fear of British intervention in Nepal even though he recognized the possibility of British efforts in that direction. What concerned Prithvinarayan Shah was that the British might opt to side with one or other of the rajas of the Nepal Tarai against him and thereby either block or render extremely difficult further Gorkhali expansion into the eastern Tarai. I think the word concern is more apt to express his attitude than the word fear, and I have tried to use this word rather than the word fear in regard to Prithvinarayan Shah's attitude towards the Company and the British. I have also pointed out that Prithvinarayan Shah's strategy for meeting this concern revolved around the twin principles of keeping the British out of the hills and maintaining friendship with them in order to offset any overtures that might be extended to them by his enemies.

During the period from 1775 to 1800, the basic concern for the British remained approximately the same as it had in the earlier period, though there was a slight shift in emphasis. It was no longer the immediate military effects of a possible British intervention in the hills that concerned the Kathmandu durbar. The durbar was concerned that the British might grant their protection to one of the hill rajas and the very presence of the British in Nepal would upset the sensitive balance of power in the hills, leading to unrest and eventual British efforts to impose order on the hills. The problem differed slightly, but the solution remained essentially the same: using and cultivating friendship with the British to counter possible alliances between the hill rajas and the British. In the review of this period I have pointed out how the Kathmandu durbar actively employed Bahadur Shah to counteract the activity of envoys from the Chaubisi Rajas to the governor general in search of military aid and assistance.

During the period from 1800 to 1804 a true fear of British intervention in Nepal swept over the Kathmandu durbar when Rana Bahadur Shah went into voluntary exile in Banaras. It was no longer a question of an alliance between a hill raja and the British that might bring the British into the hills but the very strong possibility that the ex-raja of Nepal might use British assistance to regain power in Kathmandu itself. This eventuality was averted, but in the aftermath, this exposure to danger left permanent scars in the form of pro-British and anti-British labels in the Kathmandu court.

The final period that I have reviewed, that from 1804 to 1816, I have said was characterized both by too much fear of the British and too little--too much fear of British intentions in Nepal; too little fear of British military power and mobility. It was a reaction that blinded Bhim Sen Thapa to the changing nature of British rule in India. I have said that Bhim Sen Thapa failed to see what Prithvinarayan Shah would have realized at once, that a change in the nature of one's opponent requires either a change in the nature of one's policy or greater flexibility in applying it. While reserving a final assessment of Bhim Sen Thapa for a later date, I concluded tentatively that he was unable to assess the change in the Company's government and therefore incapable of adjusting Nepal's response.

Secondly, fear of the British, actual physical fear, played a relatively minor role in the unification of Nepal, and such fear as there was did not play a significant role until the very end of the unification period.

Thirdly, I cannot agree to the proposition that fear of the British prompted the Nepalis to seek a tighter union among the hill states and therefore helped Nepal to forge a stronger nation. Nepal did, in fact, seek a tighter union, and it did forge a

stronger nation. Prithvinarayan Shah did introduce corrections into the type of administration that was commonly found in the hills before his day. And these corrections gave Nepal strength and flexibility, both of which were essential aspects of true unification. But these corrections were not introduced out of reaction to the British. It was Prithvinarayan Shah's observation of the Mughul and Maratha systems of administration that suggested these modifications to him. His analysis of the weaknesses in the Mughul and Maratha systems and his appreciation of the problems of government led to those steps that became the basis of Nepal's administrative system and its strength. I am further convinced that this system had the strength to survive generations of misuse and a war with the British without succumbing to the geopolitical centrifugal forces operative in the Himalayas precisely because it was a system based not on reaction but on the positive evaluation of the problems of unified government. The system fitted the hills because it was designed for the hills by a man who knew the hills. He had the intelligence to study other systems and understand why they failed and then to re-think his own approach to government. I think Prithvinarayan Shah took the measures which he saw the internal logic of the situation demanded rather than adopting ad hoc solutions to problems that were thrown up by the mere presence of a strong East India Company, no matter how threatening that Company might seem to us to have been. Because of this, I have called Prithvinarayan Shah a practical genius. Practical genius is not 'near' genius. It is genius in the practical order as opposed to the theoretical order. By this expression I mean that Prithvinarayan Shah had the remarkable gift of being able to see and analyze a situation in concrete terms and to apply effective practical remedies. And therefore I conclude that the assumption that fear played a significant or even a determining role in the unification of Nepal is an anachronism that imposed on the unification period the attitudes common to the Bhim Sen Thapa period. Such an assumption will not stand the test of careful scrutiny. Those who are tempted to hold such a view are being tyrannized by time. They see the Company for what it became and not for what it was, and they read into Prithvinarayan Shah's decisions and injunctions a reaction of fear rather than awareness and concern. Fear is negative and leads to a defensive posture. Awareness and concern are positive and lead to action.

Footnotes

1. Ludwig F. Stiller, S.J., The Rise of the House of Gorkha (New Delhi, 1973).
2. Baburam Acharya, Sri Panch Baramaharajadhiraj Prithvinarayan Shah Ko Samkshipta Jivani (Kathmandu, 2024 B.S.), i, 165-6.
3. Cf. Iswari Prasad, India in the Eighteenth Century (Allahabad, 1973), pp. 41-3, gives a perfect example of this sort of listing of causes.
4. The expression Hindu-Pad-Padshahi was been variously interpreted by scholars. Basically it implied a union of Hindus for the protection of their religion and invoked the power of the Marathas as well as of other leading Hindu princes in the defense of Hinduism. The differences between opinions expressed by scholars can in most cases be traced to the individual's concept of the degree of militancy involved in the protection and defense of Hinduism. It was a noble ideal that had strong national overtones.
5. Chauth was a levy of one-fourth of the assessed income of a territory levied by the Marathas on territories not under their direct rule. The territories paid it as protection against further Maratha raids.
6. Kalikinkar Datta, Alivardi and His Times (Calcutta, 1963), pp. 57-8, quotes several graphic passages from contemporary writers in support of this, of which one from Gangarama, Maharasthapurana, is given here: 'The Brahmans and the Pandits ran away with their books, the Sonar Benias (goldsmiths) with their weights and measures, the Gandha-vankiks (grocers, druggists, and perfumers) and the Knasarais (bell-metal workers) after closing their shops, the blacksmiths and the potters with their implements, the fishermen with their nets and ropes, and the Sankha-vaniks (conch-dealers) with their own articles. The Kayasthas and the Vaidyas followed suit . . . The Ksetris and the Rajputs fled away leaving their swords behind; the Kaivartas and the agriculturists did the same with their ploughs and with paddy seeds on the back of their oxen . . . Suddenly the Bargis [Marathas] surrounded these run-away people in the field and plundered their gold and silver to the exclusion of everything else. They cut off the hands of some, noses and ears of others, and killed many. They even ravished beautiful women, entered into the villages, and set fire to the houses'.
7. G.S. Sardesai, New History of the Marathas (Bombay, 1958), ii, 220.
8. Ibid., ii, 227-8.

9. Ibid., i, 295. Sardesai in this locus is almost lyrical in his expression of this policy, setting it forth as an imaginary speech of Shahu. In what must be one of the wildest stretches of historical imagination on record he calls it 'a studied plan of philanthropic non-violent principles applied to the politics of the day'.
10. Datta, Alivardi, pp. 115-24.
11. Sardesai, Marathas, ii, 224; also Fort William-India House Correspondence, i, pp. vii and xv.
12. Datta, Alivardi, p. 82.
13. Cf. Ludwig F. Stiller, S.J., Prithwinarayan Shah in the Light of Dibya Upadesh (Kathmandu, 1968).
14. Cf. Lucy S. Sutherland, The East India Company in Eighteenth-Century Politics (Oxford, 1962); also Arthur Berriedale Keith, A Constitutional History of India 1600-1935 (Allahabad, 1961), 2nd edition, for a survey of the early history of the East India Company. Interesting details are also to be found in W.W. Hunter, History of British India (Delhi, 1972), 2nd edition, 2 vols., and Philip Woodruff, The Men Who Ruled India: The Founders (London, 1953).
15. This preoccupation is brought out beautifully in the case of Sir Thomas Roe. He spent three and a half years trying to get a treaty from Jahangir. He was unwilling to accept anything less, even though Jahangir was quite willing to give an order granting the Company the right to trade. Roe's reasons for finding this unsatisfactory were contained in his expression, 'The Emperor rules by whim'. Apparently the magic of a legal formality would change this for Sir Thomas.
16. All Europeans trading in India wanted a permanent factory (warehouse) where trade goods could be accumulated throughout the year, because they had learned from experience that the cost of trade goods automatically increased whenever a ship put into port. The rivalries between trading companies and the value of the goods stored in the factory made an armed guard imperative.
17. In 1670 the agent or governor drew thirteen hundred pounds a year as salary; the three members of his council drew one hundred, seventy, and fifty pounds respectively. Factors received between forty and twenty pounds. Writers (clerks) received ten pounds and apprentices five. Cf. Woodruff, op.cit., p. 65.
18. Internal trade by the Company's servants became especially profitable after Alamgir's firman of 1715 granting the Company an exemption from inland duties.

19. The Company's servants in India sent money home by bills of remittance. They turned cash over to the Company in India, with which trade goods was bought. When the goods was shipped back to England an accompanying letter directed the authorities in London to pay over the concerned sums to specified people in England. The remittance lists are a good indication of the increase in private trade. A comparison of the list for 30 December 1760 and that for 31 December 1767 shows an increase of three hundred per cent. At the same time, the authorities in Calcutta were complaining that the Court's strictness on such remittances was forcing many people in India to remit their funds through the French and Dutch, thereby indicating that the huge increase was only a fraction of the money being sent back to England.
20. Perhaps the strongest criticism available of this abuse is to be found in Verelst, Rise, Progress and Present State of the English Government in Bengal, 1772.
21. The Company's initial legal powers were confined to the powers of martial law conferred on the commander of each trading voyage. When the further question arose of disputes among Europeans in India itself, the crown granted the Company the power to make laws compatible with the laws of England. The legal right to grant such powers is questionable. It was not until Bombay was transferred to the crown in 1661 that the crown had any legitimate right to grant the Company the powers to make laws in India, and this was confined to the area of Bombay. However, the very fact that the crown granted such powers as early as 1623 indicates the need felt in the Company's factories for some form of legal control of its servants.
22. Sutherland, op. cit., pp. 218-22.
23. There is no attempt here to pass over these abuses lightly. They were very serious and cannot but be condemned. However, this aspect of Company rule has been abundantly treated by both contemporary authors and historians. Attention should also be called to the complaints made by the Court of Directors on this point especially before 1775.
24. Kalikinkar Datta, ed., Fort William-India House Correspondence (Delhi, 1958), i, pp. x-xi.
25. Ibid., p. xi.
26. Ibid., p. xv.
27. H.N. Sinha, ed., Fort William-India House Correspondence (Delhi, 1957), ii, p. xxxvii.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., p. xxxvi.

30. Ibid., Letter to Court of 31 December 1758, p. 358.
31. Ibid., p. xlvi.
32. R.C. Majumdar, et al, An Advanced History of India (New York, 1967), 3rd edition, p. 664.
33. C.S. Srinivaschari, ed., Fort William-India House Correspondence (Delhi, 1962), iv, 258-9, 'Letter to Court, 27 September 1764'.
34. N.K. Sinha, ed., Fort William-India House Correspondence (Delhi, 1949), v, 89-98, 'Letter to Court, 16 March 1768', paras. 77-123. It should be noted that in addition to the regular force an additional force of sepoys was to be maintained for normal police work.
35. A letter of Prithvinarayan Shah to Ram Krishna Kunwar, dated Magh, sudi 1 roj, summarised in Samsodhan Mandal, Prithvinarayan Shah Ko Upadesh (Kathmandu, 2025 B.S.), iii, 986-8.
36. A second attempt by Kinloch to come to the assistance of Jaya Prakash was postponed because the Company's officers were obliged to send support to the south. Cf. K.C. Chaudhuri, Anglo-Nepalese Relations (Calcutta, 1960), p. 30.
37. S.C. Sarkar, 'The Nepal Frontier in the Second Half of the 18th Century', Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Third Session (Calcutta, 1939), p. 1607.
38. L.F. Stiller, S.J., 'A Letter of Giuseppe de Rovato', Journal of Tribhuvan University, v (June, 1970), No. 1, p. 10.
39. A letter of Prithvinarayan Shah to Ram Krishna Kunwar, dated Aswin, sudi 15, roj 4 (25 Aswin 1824) published in summary form in Samsodhan Mandal, Upadesh, iii, 1026-30.
40. Prithvinarayan Shah, Dibya Upadesh (Kathmandu, 2016 B.S.), ed. Yogi Nar Hari Nath, p. 19.
41. Lucy S. Sutherland, The East India Company in Eighteenth Century Politics (Oxford, 1962), pp. 218-28.
42. James Logan, Memorandum to the Board of Directors at Fort William, Home Department, Official Consultation 31 October 1769, no. 1, published by S.C. Sarkar, 'Some Interesting Documents', Bengal Past and Present, xlv (1932) serial no. 87, pp. 43-6.
43. Letter from Court, dated 16 March 1768, Fort William-India House Correspondence, v (1767-9), p. 81.
44. Letter to Court, dated 25 January 1770, Fort William-India House Correspondence, vi (1770-2), p. 180.

45. Sarkar speculates that Logan was still in Nepal in 1774 when Prithvinarayan Shah wrote to the Teshu Lama advising him against opening trade routes to the Company.
46. William Kirkpatrick, An Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul (London, 1811), p. 271; also CPC, viii, no. 332, Letter of Adbhut Singh to the governor general, received 16 April 1788.
47. Sarkar, 'Some Interesting Documents', pp. 50-1, quoted from Proceedings, dated 10 August 1771, decision of the Board in Calcutta on the Makwanpur Tarai.
48. Ibid. It is to be noted that the Board clearly indicated that the giving of this territory in farm to Prithvinarayan Shah did not constitute an abandonment of its claim. This, then, becomes a clear precedent for Nepal's holding parts of the British Tarai in zamindari on the regular payment of the annual assessment to the Company, a position that the governor general found unacceptable in 1806.
49. Chaudhuri, Relations, p.52.
50. Sarkar, 'The Nepal Frontier in the Second Half of the 18th Century', pp. 1621-2.
51. CPC, vi, no. 949; compare this with the discussion reported by Chaudhuri, Relations, pp. 53-4.
52. Prithvinarayan Shah, Dibya Upadesh, pp. 11-12.
53. Ibid., p. 11.
54. Bhasha Vamsavali, quoted in Samsodhan Mandal, Upadesh, iii, 919-20.
55. Prithvinarayan Shah, Dibya Upadesh, p. 15.
56. Dinesh Raj Pant, 'B.S. 1832 Dekhi B.S. 1858 Samma Ko Nepal Ko Itihas Nayan Prakash Parne Kehi Patraharu', Purnima, No. 17, pp. 27-51; 'Aprakashit Chhaota Aitihasic Patraharu', Purnima, No. 20, pp. 306-28; and 'Aprakashit Barhaota Aitihasic Patra', Purnima, No. 21, pp. 49-70.
57. Dinesh Raj Pant, 'Aprakashit Barhaota Aitihasic Patraharu', Purnima, No. 21, pp. 49-51.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid., pp. 54-5.
60. CPC, viii, Nos. 287, 1356, 1440, 1442, 1446; ix, No. 168; and especially x, No. 344.
61. For a more detailed treatment of this rapid advance, cf. Stillier, Gorkha, Chapter VI.

62. Ibid., pp. 257-9.
63. CPC, vii, No. 723; ix, No. 1495; and x, Nos. 1970 and 1971.
64. I do not believe the significance of this fact has been pointed out before this. According to Shakabpa, Tibet: A Political History (Yale, 1967), pp. 166-7, serious fighting in Tibet had already broken out by the time the commercial treaty was negotiated, although it was not until July that the actual Chinese invasion of Nepal had begun.
65. CPC, ix, No. 699, Letter of the governor general to the Raja of Nepal, dated 11 November 1790.
66. CPC, x, No. 682, Letter from the Raja of Nepal to the governor general, received 22 August 1792.
67. Ibid., No. 724, Letter from the Raja of Nepal to the governor general, received 5 September 1792.
68. CPC, x, Nos. 852 and 898.
69. Ibid., No. 745, Abdul Qadir Khan's report to Mr. Duncan, resident at Banaras.
70. Ibid., No. 884 (6), Letter of Gajraj Misra to the Raja of Nepal.
71. Secret Consultation 16 August 1814, No. 5, Letter of J. Adam, secretary to government, to Lt. Col. Crawford, dated 21 July 1814.
72. Secret Consultation 26 June 1800, No. 85, Letter of instructions to Captain W.D. Knox, dated 23 June 1800.
73. Secret Consultation 30 June 1802, No. 11, Instructions of governor general to Capt. Knox as first resident to Nepal.
74. Secret Consultation 17 July 1806, No. 89. Official note of the Persian secretary to government to the vakil of the raja of Nepal, dated 6 January 1806. It should be noted here that the Nepal occupation of the Palpa Tarai actually dated from the time of the raja of Palpa's detention.
75. This letter is quoted in full along with Nepal's reply in Stiller, Gorkha, pp. 240-4.
76. Henry T. Prinsep, A Narrative of the Political and Military Transactions in India under the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings 1813-20 (London, 1820), pp. 49-52.
77. The mobility of British artillery, especially at Malaon and Makwanpur was to prove one of the decisive factors in the war.